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PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY:

OR

TESTIMONIES

FROM THE WRITERS OF THE

FIRST FOUR CENTURIES.

[Price 2s. 6d.]

PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY

OF

THE TESTIMONY

FROM THE TESTAMENTS

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PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY:

OR

TESTIMONIES

FROM THE

WRITERS

OF THE

FIRST FOUR CENTURIES;

TO PROVE THAT

JESUS CHRIST WAS WORSHIPPED, AS GOD,

FROM THE BEGINNING OF THE

CHRISTIAN CHURCH.

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By THOMAS KNOWLES, D.D.

PREBENDARY OF ELY. *ke*

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## P R E F A C E.

**T**H E following sheets have been drawn up without any view or design of entering into controverfy: for That I openly disclaim, whatever may be said or wrote against them. I have therefore attacked no man personally; nor would I be understood to point at any particular work which may have appeared in favour of opposite principles, however, in general, my own may tend to invalidate them. The prevailing current

rent only of heterodox tenets, which may endanger Christianity, I mean to withstand.—In order to this, I appeal to *facts* alone, which cannot deceive, or mislead us. I wish only to establish, by these facts, the general doctrine and practice of the Christian church from its beginning; that it may not pass for granted, upon any man's word only, without further search, that the Trinitarian doctrine is a *Corruption of Christianity*; or that the devotion which is paid to the Son of God, our Lord Jesus Christ, as God, is an *Innovation* in the service of the Christian church, as it has been continued down to this day.

I HAVE



I HAVE scarcely quoted any modern authority, though I might have named many writers of the first rank and eminence in Polemical Theology, in support of this: for I depend upon nothing but ancient facts; and the vouchers for these can, of course, be taken only from the original authors, who bear testimony of their own times. I have, however, been frequently indebted, which I ought to acknowledge, to Bishop *Bull*, Dr. *Waterland*, and Mr. *Bingham*, three very respectable advocates for the orthodox doctrines of the church, for many references to those ancient writings, which might not otherwise have occurred to the memory without some assistance.

I HAVE



I HAVE taken care not to swell the pages with quotations at length in the margin ; but though they do not appear in their original languages, yet I am not aware, upon a fair examination of every passage, that any one is misconstrued, mutilated, or interpolated, to serve a purpose.

THESE Testimonies are chiefly extracts from a large collection of materials, which were originally intended for an Exposition of the *Athanasian* Creed.

BURY ST. EDMUNDS.

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## PRIMITIVE CHRISTIANITY.

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### CENTURY I.

**T**HE several writers of the ages next succeeding that of the Apostles, who are commonly called the Apostolical Fathers, must be allowed to be competent witnesses of what was taught and done by the Apostles themselves: as these likewise must be allowed to have understood the meaning of their Master, in the directions he gave them, concerning the discipline and government of his Church. If they had not understood him aright, he would certainly have corrected their mistaken notions, in this respect, after his resurrection, as he did their misconceptions of the nature of his kingdom before his death. If this degree of credit be denied to the authority of the Apostles, or their immediate successors the Primitive Fathers, which is given to writers of every other denomination, we must

lay no stress upon the testimony of either. Such a sovereign contempt for the decisions of the latter, will, it is to be feared, tend to diminish the reverence which is due to the relations of the former; and, though it is not required that the authority of both should be held equally sacred, yet the oppugners of a religious establishment, founded upon their concurrent evidence, carefully transmitted from one age to another, must be aware, that what *true* religion would lose by discarding both, can be of no advantage to the *false*; inasmuch as they deprive themselves of the same sources, from whence they endeavour to derive the corruptions of Christianity, as they do us, who prove its genuineness from thence. Our deductions, indeed, are diametrically opposite; but when it is found that the practice of the Church, which is matter of fact, corresponds with the doctrine, which, as a Church, we maintain; and that both join to support each other, we cannot, by any fair reasoning, be supposed to have misunderstood or misinterpreted either.

The practice and doctrine of the Primitive Church, during the four first centuries of it, are so expressly contradictory to the tenets of the modern professors of the Unitarian principles, and do so clearly inculcate that worship of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, as God, which they presume to deny, that there does not appear to be any so convincing a method of confuting their errors,

errors, or stopping the propagation of them, as by shewing that not only the sense and practice, but the very establishment and constitutions, of the Christian Church, have, in its best and purest ages, been uniformly guarded against the innovations and corruptions, which the advocates for Socinian refinements would introduce.

In one of the interviews which Jesus had with his Disciples, after he was risen from the dead, at the mountain in *Galilee* where he had appointed to meet them, it is said by St. *Matthew*, that, when they saw him, they *worshipped* him\*. It is not likely that he, who had refused the homage which was due to a temporal king, with disapprobation, would have received the worship which was due only to the eternal Godhead, without the same marks of disapprobation, unless it had been

\* Matt. xxviii. 17. It is added, *but some doubted*; that is, whether it were he or not. If, as is supposed, this was the appearance, which St. *Paul* mentions, to above five hundred brethren at once, then this doubting of some may be accounted for. At first it is probable, that out of so great a multitude many might see him only at a distance, or in the air; for so some read, 1 Cor. xv. 6.—*ὡφθη ἐπάνω*: he was seen *above*, of *five hundred brethren*; which gave occasion to some to doubt, till he *came nearer*, as in ver. 18, and then they were satisfied. But it can scarcely be supposed that any of the eleven doubted, after even the incredulous *Thomas* was convinced: it is most likely therefore that this appearance was in the presence of a multitude; and that the commission, now given to the eleven, was in their hearing, for the greater confirmation of their authority over the Church.



the decree of heaven, which was now to take place, that *all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father*\*! that is, by divine adoration and worship. He would not have left his disciples in such a dangerous error, without correct-

\* John, v. 22, 23. With these verses the interpretation of the 27th and 28th is connected. Thus, ver. 22, 23, The Father judgeth no man, but hath committed all judgment unto the Son : that all men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. Ver. 2. And hath given him authority to execute judgment also, because he is the Son of Man : which seems to imply something contradictory to the former ; because in his human nature he cannot be entitled to that honor, which in his divine nature is his due. With respect to this last verse therefore there have been various opinions advanced ; but *Chrysostom* seems to have removed the whole difficulty by a little variation of the stopping. For if he had power given him to execute judgment, because he was man, the same authority might be given to all men. He would therefore point it thus : And hath given him authority to execute judgment also [here he would put the stop, and remove the latter part of this verse to the next] : *Because he is the Son of Man, marvel not at this ; for the hour is coming, &c.* as if he had said, “ What I have said of the power of giving eternal life, and of executing judgment, let it not seem incredible to you, because you see that I am a man, forasmuch as I am also the Son of God : which will likewise be made manifest to you, by the resurrection of the dead, to be performed by me.” *Cyril* and *Theophylact* have approved of this punctuation : and, what will be of some weight, the *Syriac* interpreter has divided the verses in the same manner. Ver. 27, And hath given him power to execute judgment. Ver. 28, That he is the Son of Man, marvel not, &c. Upon his authority *Junius* and *Tremellius* have adopted the same division of the verses. Vid. etiam *Erasm.* in loc.

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ing them, as *Peter* did *Cornelius* soon after (Acts, x. 26); or as the angel in the *Revelation* did the Apostle, who had probably mistaken him for the Lord Jesus—*See thou do it not ; I am thy fellow-servant : worship God.* Rev. xix. 10.—But, instead of this, he is so far from discouraging them in their expressions of adoration to his person, as God, such as they were taught to pay to God alone, that he rather gives them the reason why they should now think him entitled to it. *All power is given unto me in heaven and earth.* The time is come when I had determined to assert openly my inherent right to that divine worship, which, as mediator, I chose not to assert before. But now my commission, which I came into the world to execute, must devolve upon you, and upon your successors, in the administration of their several offices in my spiritual kingdom, the Church, which is to be henceforward established in my name throughout the world. *As my father hath sent me, so now send I you\*.*

By virtue of this, which is my own authority, I give it you in charge, that whenever you admit any into the Church by the solemn rite of baptism, which I have appointed as the mode of initiation to be observed unto the end of the world, let it be administered in *the name of the*

\* This is added by the *Syriac* interpreter to verse 18, but it is not found in any of the Greek or Latin copies.

*Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost* \*, jointly and equally; for none but such a form, expressive of a right faith in the nature of the three persons in the Godhead, will avail for the claims and privileges of the true Christian.

Accordingly we find that, as soon as the Apostles began to baptize, it was in the name of the Lord Jesus (Acts, viii. 16.). And St. Paul afterwards, to shew the inefficacy of it in any other name than that of the Divinity, asks the *Corinthians* (1 Cor.), *Were ye baptized in the name of Paul?* He disclaims such an imputation, as impious and heretical; and yet, had he accounted Jesus as no more than a creature, and consequently not a fit object of adoration, where would have been the difference, whether the baptism had been administered in his name, or that of *Apollos*, or *Cephas*, or *Paul*? But, by his laying the whole stress upon their being baptized in the name of Christ only, and not of his ministers, though they be the chiefest of them, he points out to them, most plainly, that the holy service, to which they were dedicated by that sacred ordinance, could be the proper claim of none other

\* Βαπτίζοντες εἰς τὸ ὄνομα, *baptizantes in nomen, non in nomine.* Εἰς hic notat finem; & baptizari in nomen aliqujus, est illi consecrari *ad cultum*; ut quis ab illo, tanquam suo domino, denominatur, ejusque servitio se totum addicat, sicut percipitur ex verbis *Pauli*, 1 Cor i. 12. *Pasoris Lex*, in voc. ὄνομα.

but

but of God, and of their Redeemer, as God. No man, not the best and greatest of men—not a saint on earth, nor an angel in heaven—can be entitled to that entire, unlimited devotion of ourselves, of soul and body, which is promised on our parts, and which is implied in the very expression, when we are baptized into the name of Christ. The rite itself was always understood, both among Jews and Christians, to mean a covenant entered into with a person, as God ; into the faith, service, and worship of him, as the true God. Who shall usurp this authority, or who shall transfer it to another ? It is schismatical ; it is heretical. St. Paul condemned it upon this principle more especially, That it exalted the human guide into a divine teacher ; or *degraded* the divine teacher to a level with a human guide.

We learn the nature of this baptismal covenant, or what is required on our part, as well as what is promised on God's, from what passed between Philip and the eunuch, whom he had instructed in the first elements of the Christian faith : for upon the eunuch's asking him, after this, *What doth hinder me to be baptized ?* (Acts viii. 36.) he told him the chief requisite upon which he might receive the privilege ; it was an unfeigned faith in the Lord Jesus Christ from the heart, and an open confession of it with the mouth. The eunuch understood the great article of faith which Philip meant, for he had learned it from the



scripture, which had just before been explained to him; and accordingly breaks out into that solemn acknowledgment of the divinity of the Saviour, *I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God*; and, as such (as the Jews themselves always understood it) of the same nature with God\*. Into this faith he was accordingly baptized; for this is the true faith, whereby we must be saved: *there is no other name under heaven given unto men*, by which they can hope for salvation; for none but God could give it; and none but the Son of God, as God, could have procured it for us.

So constant and uniform was the practice of the Apostles to baptize in the name of Christ, that there were some who concluded, from those several passages of scripture where it is recorded† (so far were they from excluding him from this divine honor), that it was sufficient to give baptism only in the name of the Lord. But St. *Basil* has answered this, and given us the sense of the Church at that time. He says, “that in all those places, though the name of Christ only was mentioned, yet the whole Trinity was understood;” which he confirms from similar expres-

\* Ut enim præscripsit ipsa natura hominem credendum esse, qui ex homine fit; ita eadem natura præscribit et Deum credendum esse qui ex Deo fit. *Novat. cap. xi.*

† Acts, viii. 16. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts, x. 48. Peter commanded them to be baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. Acts, xix. 5. They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.

sions

fions concerning the Holy Ghost (1 Cor. xii. 13.) *By one spirit we are all baptized into one body.* And (Acts, i. v.) *Ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost*: “where the Apostles seem only to make mention of the Holy Ghost in baptism, and omit both the Father and the Son; but, says he, no one may conclude from hence, that that baptism is perfect, wherein the Holy Ghost alone is named. For the tradition ought to remain inviolable, which was given by the quickening grace; meaning the form of baptizing given by the command of Christ, Matt. xxviii.” Upon which he concludes, “that as we believe in the Father, and in the Son, and in the Holy Ghost, so we are baptized in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost\*.”

St. *Ambrose* was of the same opinion: “He that is blessed in Christ,” says he, “is blessed in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, because the name is one, and the power one†.” Thus *Didymus*, an early writer of the Church, comments upon it: “Who will not from hence conclude the equality of the Sacred Trinity, seeing there is but one faith in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, as baptism is ministered in the name of all three‡?”

\* Basil de Spirit. Sanct. c. xii.

† Ambros. de Sp. Sanct. l. i. c. iii.

‡ De Sp. Sanct. l. ii. inter Op. Hieron. vol. vi.

But



But long before *Basil's* or *Ambrose's* time, who were cotemporaries; even so early as the ancient writer of the *Recognitions*, ascribed to *Clemens Romanus*, who lived within this century, it is mentioned, as their custom, "that men were baptized under the appellation of the *Triple Mystery* \*." And again, "by invoking the name of the Blessed Trinity †." From whence we cannot but observe, that the three persons were then considered as equal by nature; and that the same divine homage, as the service implied, was paid to all alike. The sense of this can no more be mistaken, than that of our blessed Saviour himself: an invocation implies divinity; and divinity will not admit of greater or less.

St. *Cyprian* derives this practice of the Church from the first institution: "for," says he, "the Lord, after his resurrection, taught his disciples after what manner they should baptize, when he said, Go teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; where he delivered the doctrine of the Trinity, unto which mystery or sacrament the nations were to be baptized." Accordingly the Apostolical Canons order "every Bishop and Presbyter, that shall presume to baptize any other way than according to the com-

\* Clem. Rom. Recognit. l. vi. c. ix.

† Id. l. iii. c. lxxviii.

mand of the Lord, in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, to be deposed \*.” And though these canons were not, as the name would imply, and as some have supposed, drawn up by the Apostles themselves, yet doubtless they were very ancient; and perhaps, as Bishop *Beveridge* surmises †, might be a collection of the canons of the Church, made at different times, by different councils, from the beginning to that of Nice. For this council frequently cites them as Antient Laws—Canons of the Fathers—Ecclesiastical, and even Apostolical Canons.

The author of the *Apostolical Constitutions* (whether it was *Clemens*, or any other, it matters not, for they are replete with useful information concerning the discipline of the Church at this time) has given us the form of benediction over the catechumens, immediately addressed to Christ, “whose truth endures for ever, whom infants praise, and sucklings bless, and angels celebrate and adore ‡.” To which form *Chrysostom* often refers, as one of the public prayers of the Church §. It concludes, “To thee belongs glory, honor, and adoration; and by thee to thy Father, in the Holy Spirit, world without end.”

\* Canon. Apost. c. 49.

† Vid. Bever. Vindic. Canon.

‡ Apost. Constit. l. viii. c. 6.

§ Vid. Chrys. Hom. xviii. in 2 Cor.

From

From whence *Tertullian* argues, upon another occasion, "what an absurdity is it to cry out, "world without end," to others besides Christ his God \*!"

In the form of prayer for consecrating the water in baptism, which the author of the Constitutions has given us, the priest, after blessing and praising the Lord God Almighty, the Father of the only begotten Son, next *adores the only begotten Son himself*; and for him gives thanks to the Father, that he took upon him to die for all men upon the cross †.

These testimonies surely are abundantly sufficient to prove, that the form of baptizing, which was at first delivered by Christ, was precisely observed by the Apostles, and after them by the general consent and practice of the Church; and that this form, thus established, was understood to confirm the divinity of each person in the Godhead, and his worship.—But of this we shall see more in the following times.

This, which is called the compendium of their faith, was the foundation of that religious worship which was henceforward paid to the Son and Holy Ghost, as well as to the Father, in their most solemn addresses to heaven, both public and private. For I shall only argue from their practice, which cannot be mistaken; not from their

\* *Tertul. de Spectac. c. 25.* † *Const. l. vii. c. 43.*



doctrine, which, however explicit, has been misinterpreted.

Within less than a year after our Saviour's death, when the first martyr, St. *Stephen*, was pouring forth his innocent soul unto death for the testimony of Jesus, and for the word of his truth, just before the fatal blow came which put an end to his life, he was heard to utter two short ejaculations, or prayers; one for himself—*Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!*—and the other in behalf of his murderers—*Lord, lay not this sin to their charge*—both addressed to the Lord Jesus: the one, because he believes him to be in heaven, and ready to receive his departing soul; the other, because he believes him to be God, who could forgive their sin. Without such a belief, he must be supposed, in the most awful moment, to trifle both with himself, and his God: for he would have commended his soul, the most important trust, to one who could not save; and he would have mocked God, by robbing him of his prerogative, who alone can forgive sin\*.

*Chrysostom,*

\* *Invoking and saying*—this is the literal version of the words ἐπικαλούμενον καὶ λέγοντα, the name of God not being in the original. Nevertheless such a solemn prayer to Christ, in which a departing soul is thus solemnly committed into his hands, is such an act of worship, as we cannot believe any good man would have paid to a mere creature.—Bishop *Burnet* on the Articles, p. 48, justly observes, that Stephen here *worships Christ*, in the very same manner in which

Christ

*Chrysostom*, whose eloquent pen is never more eloquent than upon this subject, puts it into the mouths of *St. Stephen's* accusers, that "he worshipped a god that was buried, and preached a creator shut up in a tomb: that he whetted his tongue, and stretched it out against God himself, and set up one that is dead as an anti-god to the great Creator of the world\*." *St. Chrysostom* plainly understood, by this, that *Stephen* did worship Christ, and that he worshipped him as the true God.

About two years after this, when *Ananias*, one of the Seventy, was directed by Christ in a vision to enquire for Paul, who was just then become a convert to the Christian faith, he pleads against being sent upon such an errand to such a man; that he was a bitter persecutor of all his disciples, wherever he could find them; and that he had, at that instant, received authority from the chief priests to *bind all that call on his name*. Acts, ix. 14. By which he meant to distinguish the character of true believers, as those whose practice it was to worship Christ as their God.

Christ had but a little while before *worshipped his Father* on the cross. *Doddridge* in loc.—The Bishop adds, "From this it is evident, that if Christ was not the true God, and equal to the Father, then this protomartyr died in two acts that seem not only idolatrous, but also blasphemous; since he worshipped Christ in the same acts in which Christ had worshipped his Father." Ib.

\* *Chrysost.* Orat. in *S. Steph.* tom. vi. p. 276.



For that this was his meaning by the expression, and not merely the being *called by his name*, is evident, because they were not as yet called Christians; and therefore it could not mean, as some critics would understand it, those who were named by the name of Christ, but those who invoked, or worshipped him, before that character was known in the world: for that, we are told, begun at *Antioch*, after St. Paul's conversion. Acts, xi. 26.—St. Peter had quoted the same expression (Acts, ii. 21.) from the prophet Joel, and applied it to the days of Christ; where there can be no doubt but invocation is to be understood, and that in prayer to the Supreme Being, as the means of being saved from impending destruction.

Accordingly, when St. Paul himself afterwards directs his Epistle to the Corinthians, among whom he had for nearly two years been preaching the Christian faith, and had raised and planted a Church there, composed both of Jewish and Gentile converts, he inscribes it *unto the Church of God, which is at Corinth; to them that are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be Saints; with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours.* 1 Cor. i. 2\*.

By

\* Though Dr. *Hammond* would translate this phrase, in this place, passively, as if it meant only *called by the name*, yet he is elsewhere forced, as the context requires, to understand

By these distinguishing characteristics he explains what he means by a true Christian; it is one who is sanctified in Christ Jesus, as all Christians are, who are by baptism dedicated and devoted to him and his service; it is one whose internal sanctity answers to his external profession; it is one who calls on the name of Christ Jesus our Lord; who prays to him, as well as addresses the Father in his name, as the common head and Lord of all, whether they be Jews or Gentiles\*.

And if prayer was wont to be made to him, it was for this good purpose, that a benediction might be obtained from him, even *grace and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ*; that summary of all blessings which heaven can bestow, or man can ask. Had it been

stand it actively, as in Rom. x. 13—*Whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord*, that is, prays to Christ as he ought, *shall be saved*; by which, no doubt, the invocation of Christ is made the condition of obtaining salvation through him: and it is equally plain, that, to *call on the name of the Lord*, comprehends every act of religious worship; to direct our prayers to him, and to implore his help. Vid. *Bull's Prim. and Apof. Trad.* p. 33 and 35. See also *Whitby* on 1 Cor. i. 2. To this we may add, that, when the expression is used, *we are called by thy name*, the manner is very different; as, in Jer. xiv, 8. the Septuagint has it, ὄνομα σε ἐπκέκληται ἐφ' ἡμᾶς—literally, thy name is called upon us. And Acts, xv. 17.

\* This is the interpretation *Ambrose* puts upon the expression, both theirs and ours; applying the one to the Jews, and the other to the Gentiles: *Cum Judæis veris jungit & gentes*. Vid. etiam *Erasm.* in loc.

unlawful

unlawful to offer up such prayers, the Apostle would have corrected this error, as he did others, which he wrote to them about: *I beseech you by the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind, and in the same judgment*: or, had it run counter to the general practice of the Church, he would have condemned it, as he did another schismatical innovation—*We have no such custom, neither the church of God*. But *the church of God, and they that call on the name of Christ Jesus our Lord*, are, in his address to them, the same; who, as such, were entitled to that grace and peace from God the Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ, which, as the servant of God, he prays may be their lot; even the greatest of all heavenly blessings, to be derived from God the Father, and God the Son, equally and jointly\*.

Many more instances of this kind might be given, especially from St. Paul's preaching and epistles, where true believers and true christians, by which is meant collectively the Church, are characterized by such as *call on the name of the Lord Jesus*; by which their mode of worship is sufficiently denoted. But I shall add only one evidence more from the scriptures, which might

\* Ut sensus sit, A Patre pariter atque à Filio pacem proficisci, says *Erasmus*.



alone have been alleged in full proof of the universal practice, as well as doctrine, of the Apostolical Church. In the Revelation of St. John, the whole church in heaven and earth is represented in solemn acts of adoration, offered up to *the Lamb with seven horns, and seven eyes*; that is, with perfect power and perfect wisdom, who is seated on the same throne with his Father, equal in dignity as in nature; one part of which divine homage is sung by the Church; another by the Church and the Angels; and the third by every creature in heaven and on earth.

*Rev. ch. v. ver. 8—And when he had taken the book, the four beasts, and four-and-twenty elders, fell down before the Lamb, having every one of them harps, and gold vials full of odours, which are the prayers of saints.* Some understand by the four beasts, or rather, as it should be translated, *the living creatures\**, the christian church in the four corners of the world, or the whole body of the faithful; others think they are hieroglyphical representations of the Angelic nature. But by the Elders are undoubtedly meant the choir of humble worshippers in the temple of God; whence it has been conjectured, that the Elders are symbols of the old, and the creatures of the new

\* Mr. Mede and others have translated it *animalia*.



church triumphant in Heaven\*. They both however, whatever we understand by them as christian people, fall down in humble reverence and adoration before the Lamb, the Lord Jesus Christ, who is the object of their worship; and that, not in an inferior kind of worship, as some would distinguish it, but in the posture of most profound adoration in a devout prostration of their bodies before his holy presence, with the sacred instruments of praise, which are signified by the harps; and with the consecrated odours of incense, which denoted their prayers. If then both prayers and praises were offered up unto Jesus by the church, what more solemn worship could be directed to God the Father? and if he were entitled to the same worship as the Father, it is because he is partaker of the same nature; or else we must suppose that the whole christian church are instructed to become idolaters.

The doxology, or divine hymn, which was thus begun by the church to the honor of Christ, is in the second part carried on by the Angels—Ver. 11, *And I beheld, and I heard the voice of many angels round about the throne, and the beasts, and the elders:—*Ver. 12, *Saying, with a loud voice,*

\* Taylor, in his Hebrew Concordance, in vocem *Cherubim*, has with great probability supposed, that, in the Apocalypse, the *Cherubim* represent the people or body of the Church of God; as the twenty-four *Elders* represent the Ministers of the Church.

*Worthy is the Lamb that was slain, to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing.* In this the angels acknowledge, as the church had done, the infinite merits of the Lord Jesus, the Saviour and Redeemer of the world, who, as such, is worthy of all the homage and service which the hosts of heaven can give him, throughout the endless ages of eternity.

This tribute of divine worship, thus begun by the church, and carried on by the angels, as constituting one assembly, is finished by the voice of the whole creation—Ver. 13, *And every creature which is in heaven, and on the earth, and under the earth, and such as are in the sea, and all that are in them, heard I saying, blessing, and honor, and glory, and power, be unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, for ever and ever.*—Here the two persons in the Godhead, Father and Son, are distinguished from each other, as they bore distinct parts in the œconomy of our salvation. But the very same degree of religious worship, the same honor and glory, are in the same words (as before, ch. iv. ver. 11.) ascribed unto him that sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb, the partner of his throne and dignity; to signify that their essence is the same, and that they worshipped and glorified one and the same God for ever and ever; equally divine and equally eternal.

The

The whole is closed by the Church, as it begun, with the lowest prostration before the everlasting Godhead. Ver. 14, *And the four beasts said, Amen. so be it. And the four-and-twenty elders fell down, and worshipped Him that liveth for ever and ever*, in testimony of their concurrence in those religious addressees, which the full choir of the redeemed have joined to send up as incense to their glorious Redeemer. May we devoutly exercise ourselves in the same religious addressees to the honor and glory of our God and Saviour, with his church militant here on earth, that we may be duly qualified to join in them with the angelic host, when we shall be admitted into the church triumphant in Heaven !

Such is the evidence which the Scriptures afford us ; and we cannot want stronger or greater, to prove that this was the constant practice of the church in the age of the Apostles ; especially, as this last instance is recorded by him, who in the last chapter of his Revelation tells us, that an Angel had rejected with abhorrence the offer he made of falling down to worship him, because he was his fellow-servant, and directed him to worship God only ; for that to pay it to any other was to wrong God, who is a jealous God, and will not give his honor to another. But the same homage had been refused before, and upon the same grounds. Might it not be, as some have



conjectured, that the Apostle mistook the Angel, *who shewed him these things*, for the Lord Jesus Christ, in such an assumed appearance, and therefore fell down to worship him? Most assuredly he did not mean to be guilty of idolatry: the Angel understood that he would be, if he persisted in this devotion; and yet he knew that it had been paid to the only-begotten Son of God, by the glorious inhabitants of Heaven: the consequence is plain, that he was lawfully worshipped as God.

I cannot conclude this Century better than with a reflection of Bishop *Bull's*, very much to our purpose.

“ Our sacred scriptures declare, and we profess to believe, a Messiah, or Christ, who is the Saviour of our souls; who is to us wisdom and justification, and sanctification, and redemption; who hears the prayers of all that call upon his holy name, and therefore is omnipresent and omniscient, and knows the hearts; who is with his church throughout the world, defends and protects it, that neither the powers of the earth nor the gates of hell can prevail against it; who is placed on the throne with his Father, and sits there to be worshipped and adored by men, and Angels, and Archangels, and all the host of Heaven, with divine worship and adoration; and who at the end of the world, shining in immense glory and majesty, surrounded with Angels, his Ministers, shall come to judge the world; not only all the  
actions



actions, but all the secrets of the hearts of men; shall bring them to light, awarding his enemies to eternal darkness, and rewarding his faithful servants with eternal glory. Can any one less than God do this? or could it ever have been said of any one, who was not God?" Bp. Bull. *Jud. Eccles. Cath.* p. 12.

THE HISTORY OF THE  
CITY OF LONDON  
FROM THE FOUNDATION  
TO THE PRESENT  
STATE OF THE CITY  
AND OF THE  
COUNTY OF MIDDLESEX  
IN THE  
SEVENTEENTH CENTURY  
BY  
JOHN STOW  
1618

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## CENTURY II.

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**I**N this age of the christian church, immediately after that of the Apostles, their successors in the Ministry, whom they themselves had appointed before they died, took care to follow the steps of their inspired teachers, both in the doctrine they preached, and in the practice they inculcated. Accordingly we find, that the same form of divine worship to Christ, as God, is faithfully continued: indeed the institution was now become so universal, throughout the body of christians, as it was copied from the divine original, that as St. Paul concludes his second Epistle to the Corinthians with this solemn invocation, "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all;" so *Clemens*, called *Romanus*, who was companion and disciple of St. Peter,

Peter, and according to the compiler of the *Apostolic Constitutions*\* was ordained Bishop of Rome by him, as Linus was by St. Paul, finishes his Epistle to the same church of Corinth in the same manner: "The grace of our Lord Jesus be with you, and with all who have been called every where by God, and through him; by whom (or, as he elsewhere expresses it, with whom) be unto him glory, honor, power, majesty, and dominion, from everlasting to everlasting." That St. Paul meant this as an invocation to God the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, and not merely a general wish to bestow upon them the spiritual blessings he hopes to obtain for them from above, is certain, from the common seal of prayers being affixed to it—*Amen*: and the learned commentator upon the Epistle of *Clemens* has observed, in his Notes upon the 20th chapter†, that the doxology which is frequently used by this Apostolic Father, and was borrowed from St. Paul, is evidently in such a style, when applied to Christ, as it would be the height of blasphemy and impiety to apply to any other being than to the true God: "But especially to us, who flee to his mercy, through our Lord Jesus Christ; to whom be glory, and majesty, for ever and ever. Amen." But, in truth, the very same form of prayer is

\* Lib. vii. c. 47.

† Clement. Ep. 1. ed. Wotton, in Not. Cap. xx.



found in the Liturgies of all christian churches, from the earliest ages.

*Ignatius* was another disciple of the Apostles; for though it may not be so certain, as some have supposed, that he saw our Saviour (*Chrysostom* says he did not\*), yet was he intimately conversant with St. Peter and St. Paul, and instructed, more particularly, by St. John. *Eusebius* tells us†, that when *Ignatius* came to *Smyrna*, on his way to *Rome*, he wrote an Epistle to the church at *Ephesus*; another to that in *Magnesia*; another to that at *Trallium*; and a fourth to the church at *Rome*. Then, removing from *Smyrna* to *Troas*, he dispatched two more from thence, one to the church at *Philadelphia*, and the other to the church of *Smyrna*; and the last he wrote more privately to his fellow-pupil, *Polycarp*. These seven therefore we may safely look upon as genuine; however some others, under his name, may be called in question.

In the salutation of the Epistle to the Ephesians, he uses almost St. Paul's words, but in a remarkable manner; calling them "elect by the will of the Father, and of Jesus Christ, our God:" and in the Epistle to the Romans, in same style, "Suffer me to be the imitator of the passion of Christ, my God‡." In

\* Chrysost. Hom. in Ignat. tom. i. p. 508.

† Eccles. Hist. l. iii. c. 36.

‡ Ep. ad Rom. §. vi.

this Epistle likewise he exhorts the Romans to pray to Christ for him; as St. Paul often does in his Epistles\*. He begins his letter to the Church of *Smyrna* in the religious strain of thanksgiving: "I glorify Jesus Christ, the God."

When the Emperor pronounced his final sentence upon him, that he should be sent to Rome, there to be devoured by wild beasts, he directed his praises to Christ for such a decree: "I thank thee, O Lord, that thou hast condescended thus perfectly to honor me with thy love, and hast thought me worthy, with thy Apostle Paul, to be bound in iron chains†." This account was probably written by *Philo* and *Agathopus*, the two Deacons who accompanied the Martyr from Antioch to Rome, and were present during the whole time of his martyrdom. And can we suppose that they would have represented their venerable Bishop and teacher as an idolater, if it had then been accounted idolatry to offer up their prayers to Christ? Or can we suppose that so pious a sufferer for the truth's sake would have set so dangerous an example, in his last moments, to those whose souls he held so dear to him? And yet, when he was come to Rome, with all the solemnity that could be expressed by one who was preparing to meet his judge at his heavenly tribunal, he joined with the brethren, whom

† Ep. ad Rom. § 4.

† Act. Martyr. §. 7.

he found there, in the most exalted spirit of prayer, heartily recommending the state of the church to the care and protection of his blessed Saviour: "And so, all the brethren kneeling down, he prayed to the Son of God in behalf of the churches\*." As before, on his way to Rome, still persisting in his pious addresses to Christ, he prays that now, as God's own corn, he might be ground between the teeth of the wild beasts, and become white bread for his heavenly master†: and, at the place of execution, "glorifying our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom, and with whom, to the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be power and glory, in the holy Church throughout all ages. Amen‡."

St. Paul, in thirteen of his Epistles, prays for grace and peace from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ; and St. John the same in his second Epistle; so does *Polycarp*, who was a disciple of St. John, in his Epistle to the Philippians, join God the Father and the Son together,

\* Act. Martyr. § 12.

† Ad. Rom. § 4.

‡ Act. Martyr. ad finem.—Socrates in his Eccles. Hist. l. vi. c. 8, has told us, that Ignatius saw a vision, wherein he heard the angels, with alternate hymns, celebrating the honor of the Holy Trinity; and that, in imitation of this, he instituted the method of antiphonal hymns in the church of Antioch, which afterwards became of general use in the whole christian church.



in his supplication to Heaven for grace and benediction; for thus that Epistle begins: "Mercy and peace from God Almighty, and from the Lord Jesus Christ our Saviour, be multiplied unto you:" and again, in § 12, "The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, and Jesus Christ himself, the eternal High Priest, the Son of God, build you up in faith and truth." And to shew how much he was in earnest, in recommending that same faith in Jesus Christ, which he professed himself, at the awful moment of his martyrdom, which happened about sixty years after *Ignatius's*, when it is not to be conceived that he would dissemble, he concludes his last prayer at the stake with this solemn doxology: "O Lord God Almighty, I praise thee, I bless thee, I glorify thee, together with the eternal and heavenly Jesus Christ, thy beloved Son; with whom be all glory to thee and the Holy Spirit, both now, and for ever, world without end. Amen\*." And his church of Smyrna, in the circular Epistle to all Christians, following his example, prays, "that mercy, peace, and love may be multiplied to them from God the Father, and our Lord Jesus Christ†." They add, in another part,

\* Polycarp. Martyr. ap. Coteler. Patr. Apost. ii. 2. p. 199.

† See Ep. Eccles. Smyr. de Martyr. Polycarp. § 14; & Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. iv. cap. 15.

" that



“ that they could not leave Christ, and worship, or pray to any other\*.”

After the death of *Polycarp*, the church of Smyrna wrote this circular letter to the churches of Pontus, to give them an account of his martyrdom : and, among other memorable occurrences that attended and followed the execution of the martyr, they mention a remarkable one, much to our purpose, which was, That, after he was dead, many of the Christians were desirous of getting the remains of his body, in order to have buried them decently and honorably ; but were prevented by a suggestion of some Jews, who prevailed upon the proconsul not to suffer them to carry away the body of the martyr, lest they should desert their crucified master, and henceforth worship *Polycarp* in his stead. “ This they did, say they, not considering how impossible it is that we should either forsake the worship of Christ, who suffered for the salvation of all those who are saved in the whole world, or that we should worship any other. For we worship him, as being the Son of God, not a mere man ; but the martyrs we only love, as they deserve, for their great affection to their King and Master, and as the disciples and followers of their Lord, whose partners and fellow-disciples we wish to be†.” And then they conclude their

\* Vid. Act. Polycarp. ap. Asse. p. 27.

† Act. Mar. § 17.

Epistle, " We wish you, brethren, farewell in the Lord, walking in the word of Jesus Christ, according to his gospel, with whom be glory to God the Father, and the Holy Ghost\*.

This is the incontestible testimony of a Church planted by St. John himself, who placed *Polycarp* there, to prove that they paid divine worship to Christ, as the Son of God, in exclusion of every creature, however eminent or deserving: and it is so much the more valuable in this case, not only because it is so plain and explicit, but because it is so near to the time of the Apostles, and comes from serious persons of great authority in the christian church; expressing in the strongest terms, and before the face of their enemies, the doctrine they had received, and the discipline they had, as a church, been trained up in, under the instruction of their venerable Bishop *Polycarp*, who had himself been instructed by St. John, the great asserter of Christ's divinity. They strenuously maintain the worship of Jesus Christ, and yet as strenuously disclaim all creature-worship. What then their opinion of Christ must be, every one may judge.

If the acknowledgment of enemies may be thought more convincing to those, who really want to be convinced, than the evidence of friends, which may be judged partial, we have

\* Vid. Valef. Not. ad Euseb. p. 73. Act. Mar. § 22.

this

this also in direct proof of the practice among Christians. For when *Pliny* the younger was employed by the Emperor *Trajan* to enquire into the nature of the Christian assemblies, in the provinces of *Pontus* and *Bithynia*, where he governed as pro-prætor with consular authority—and was ordered to punish the Christians, as he thought they deserved, for refusing to invoke the Gods—he took his account (it being most likely thus to obtain a true one) from those who had attended their assemblies and now forsaken them. But all he could gather from these revolting informers was, that the whole sum of that sect or error lay in this, that they (the Christians) were wont, upon a set solemn day, to meet together before sun-rise, and to sing among themselves a hymn to Christ, as the God whom they worshipped—that the contagion of this superstition had overspread not only cities, but towns and country villages\*. This latter was probably written about the year of our Lord 107, when the per-

\* Plin. Ep. xcvi. l. 10. These hymns are called by an ancient writer, mentioned by Eusebius, l. v. c. 28, Psalms. Psalms also, says he, and hymns of the brethren, written by the faithful from the beginning, celebrate Christ the word of God, and pronounce him God. Of this kind, no doubt, were the hymns which St. Paul refers to, in his Epistle to Ephesians, c. v. 19, “speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs unto the Lord;” that is, to Christ. *Speaking to themselves* evidently corresponds with that alternate mode of *singing among themselves*.



secution under *Trajan* was carried on with some warmth ; wherein the pious martyr *Ignatius* was condemned to die. Indeed, after this, the Emperor relaxed somewhat of his severity, but he still required punishment upon conviction. This persecuting spirit, softened, as it might seem, with lenity, drew from Tertullian those truly oratorical observations upon this edict : “ It spares and rages, dissembles and yet punishes. If he condemns them, why does he not hunt them out ? If he thinks them not to be searched out, why does he not acquit them\* ?”

Indeed, the whole purpose of *Pliny's* commission consisted in this, to find out those who had deserted the Temple, and worshipped Christ : and the whole confession of those who were examined as Christians, confirmed his suspicions, that they offered up their prayers to Christ, instead of doing sacrifice to the Gods. From hence it is plain, that this was their custom : they met together, where they could with the greatest safety, on the Lord's day ; then they performed their solemn devotions, and these devotions were addressed to Christ, as God. It is most probable that this was the hymn which *Lucian* the heathen, who lived in this century, endeavours to ridicule, when he objects to the Christians the worship of their crucified impostor, as he blasphemously styles our

\* Tertul. Apol. ii. c. 3.



bleſſed Saviour\*. And though the whole be an indecent banter, in order to expoſe the religious practice of the Chriſtians yet it is a proof, that he had learned from them that the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt, were the joint objects of their divine worſhip. Thus far he attests the truth of the fact, whilst he tries to discredit the principle, that they did really worſhip their Saviour, however persecuted they were for it; for upon this ground alone persecutions were ſet on foot: nothing elſe could be laid to their charge, but this was conſtantly; it was therefore undoubtedly their conſtant practice. The concluſion muſt be as clear as the fact: if they worſhipped Chriſt, they worſhipped him as God, and not as man.

When the Heathens urged this objection againſt the cuſtom of the Chriſtians—that it was even a degree of madneſs in them to rank a crucified man immediately after the immutable God—*Juſtin* answers it by telling them that they objected this, becauſe they did not underſtand the myſtery of that practice. And *Minucius Felix*, who lived in the next century, has explained the Martyr's meaning: for its being ſtill charged upon them as folly, that they worſhipped a crucified man, he replies, “That they were miſtaken in their charge; for that He whom they worſhipped was God, and not a mere mortal man †.” This

\* *Lucian. Philopatris, prope finem; & in Proteo, p. 764.*

† *Minuc. Dial. p. 88.*

shews, however, that they uninterruptedly continued to worship him still, and still believed in his divine nature.

But the charge rose yet higher: for the enemies of the christian name maliciously taxed them, whilst they paid adoration to their Saviour, with having cast off the worship of the true God, and with being therefore guilty of atheism. *Justin* answers, "We confess we are atheists with respect to such as you account to be gods; but not so in respect of the true God, the father of righteousness, and wisdom, and all other virtues, who is pure from the least mixture or spot of evil: Him, and his Son, who came forth from him, and the Spirit of prophecy, we worship and adore, honoring them in truth, and with the highest reason\*."

I know that *Bellarmino*, the great champion of the Popish cause, and others of that communion, who defend the worship of angels, have quoted this passage from *Justin Martyr*, as it commonly stands there, in defence of that practice; for thus it runs, when we take the whole as it is found: "But him [the true God], and his Son, who came from him, and taught both us, and the host of good Angels who followed him, and were made like unto him, and also the Spirit of prophecy, we worship and adore:" that is, says *Bellarmino*, "We worship and adore the true

\* *Justin. Apol. i. § 6.*

God, and his Son, and the holy Angels, and the spirit of prophecy:" whereas he only says, that the angels were taught by the Son, as we ourselves were; and did not mean to rank them, any more than others who were taught by him, among the objects of adoration and worship. The very learned Dr. Ashton has plainly proved that there has been a transposition of the words, in order to make them favourable to this doctrine; but even as they stand now, if they be properly pointed, they will give no advantage to the practice of the church of Rome\*.

And that this was truly the Martyr's meaning, and not as they have warped it to their own purpose, is evident from his repeating the same answer to the like objection, in another part of the same Apology, as well as in his Dialogue with *Trypho*. In the Apology he says, "they could demonstrate, that as they worship God, the creator of all things, so with equal reason, they worshipped Jesus Christ in the second place, and the Holy Spirit of prophecy in the third, knowing Jesus Christ to be the Son of the true God." And that he might not be mistaken, or that he might not be supposed to admit the worship of a creature, even though it were so high in rank as an Angel, which is in the number of

\* Vide Dr. Ashton's Ed. of Justin Martyr. Apol. Not. p. 11, 8vo. & Epist. ad Decan. Moss. ad calcem notarum.



creatures still, he tells the Emperor a little after\*, "That though they included the Son and the Holy Spirit, in their acts of devotion, yet they held it unlawful to worship any but God alone." And therefore, in the dialogue with *Trypho*, he styles Jesus Christ "the mighty God who was to be adored†:"—professing by all this their belief in the true divinity of Christ; since, upon any other supposition, they acknowledged that they would have been guilty of the grossest idolatry, whilst they thus declared that they worshipped none but God, and yet paid divine honor to another, whom, as they are now falsely represented, they believed to be only a creature. They were not to be found involved in such an impious contradiction. They might with truth say, *We know what we worship*.

*Athenagoras*, who had been himself an eminent Philosopher at *Athens*, in his embassy for the Christians, argues with the Heathen Philosophers against the charge of Atheism, because they did not worship their Idols, as *Justin Martyr* does: "Who would not wonder, when he hears that we, who call upon God the Father, and God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, shewing their power in the Unity, and their distinction in order, should be called Atheists‡?" This Apology was

\* Id. p. 64.

† Just. Dial. cum Tryph. p. 302.

‡ Athenag. Apcl. p. 11.



presented to the Emperor *Marcus Aurelius* about A. D. 178.

There was no one in higher repute, in this century, for soundness of faith, and piety of life, than *Melito* the Bishop of *Sardis*. About the year 170, when the persecution began to rage violently against the Christians, he, among others, presented an Apology in their behalf to the same Emperor, wherein he tells him, "That they were not worshippers of stones, which are void of sense; but adorers of the only God, who is before and above all things, and of his Christ, who is truly the word of God before all ages." Intimating that this could not be accounted idolatry in them, as was the nature of that worship which the Heathens paid to their Gods; but that the adoration of Christ, together with the Father, was in truth the adoration of the true Godhead.

At this time lived *Irenæus*, the renowned Bishop of *Lyons*, who was trained up under the tuition of *Polycarp*, the disciple of St. John, as he himself tells *Florinus*, in an Epistle quoted by Eusebius\*. We cannot therefore doubt of his being well grounded in the whole of the Apostolic doctrine; and that he carefully transmitted it, in all its simplicity, to the church over which he was appointed to preside. Accordingly we find, that when he recites the symbol of faith,

\* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. lib. v. c. 20.

that is, the articles of the Creed which the catholic church had received from the Apostles, and their disciples, he proposes Christ, as our Lord and God, to be worshipped by all, in these words: "That every knee should bow to Jesus Christ, our Lord and God, and Saviour and King, by the will of the invisible Father\*."

When this same venerable Prelate is giving an account of the miraculous works which were wrought by the Church in his time, and more particularly that of casting out Devils, he ascribes this power wholly to their invoking the name of Jesus Christ, which was efficient to that mighty purpose†. And if we would know what was the substance of that invocation, the author of the Apostolic Constitutions has recorded the very forms of prayer which were then used in the public service of the church for the Energumens; for the Bishop's benediction, as he informs us, runs in these words: "O thou only begotten God, the Son of the great Father, thou that bindest the strong one, and spoilest his goods—thou, whom infants praise and sucklings bless, and Angels celebrate and adore—rebuke the evil spirits, and deliver the works of thy hands from the vexation of the adverse spirits; for to thee belongs glory, honor, and adoration, world without end.

\* Iren. l. i. c. 2.

† Id. l. ii. c. 57; & Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. v. 7.

Amen.

Amen\*." *Chrysostom* often refers to this, as one of the public prayers of the church†; and there is no doubt but it was personally and immediately addressed to Christ, as God.

*An oath with men is for confirmation, in which they swear by the greater, not by the creatures, not by any less than by God himself; for it is a direct appeal to the tribunal of Heaven, and from thence alone they look for the curse that will await the breach of it. Irenæus* understood this, as his Lord had explained it in the Gospel; and therefore added to his book *περὶ ὀγδοάδος*, mentioned by *Eusebius*‡, this solemn and religious obtestation, which he meant to leave upon the consciences of posterity, that the book itself might be derived down pure and uncorrupted to future ages: "I adjure thee, whoever thou art that shall transcribe this book, by our Lord Jesus Christ, and by his glorious coming, wherein he shall judge the quick and the dead, that thou compare what thou transcribest, and diligently correct it by the copy from whence thou transcribest it; and that thou likewise transcribe this adjuration, and annex it to thy copy." We cannot but collect, from this remarkable appeal, that

\* *Constitut.* l. viii. c. 6.

† *Vid.* *Chrysost.* *Hom.* xviii. in 2 *Cor.* p. 373.

‡ *Euseb.* *Eccles. Hist.* l. v. c. 20.—*Hieronymus* in *Catalogo* habent *περὶ τῶν ὀγδοάδων* egregium σύνταγμα. De *Ogdoadibus* *Valentini* vide *Irenæum* et *Epiphanium*. *Valef.* *Not.* in loc.



*Irenæus* himself acknowledged, and took it for granted that others would for ever acknowledge too, the supreme power, infinite knowledge, and inflexible justice of the Lord Jesus Christ, who could take cognizance of such a breach of trust, delivered to them by so solemn an act of invocation, and could likewise punish it, as it deserved, with eternal inflictions. In other words, it conveyed no other sense or form of adjuration, than if he had said, as the High-Priest did to our Saviour at the bar, *I adjure thee by the living God*: for it would have been nothing less than a solemn mockery, though delivered in the most serious terms of a religious appeal to Heaven, if he had conceived or intended it to be made to any other but the omniscient, omnipotent Godhead; to the *throne of Heaven, and to him that sitteth thereon*.

Cotemporary with *Irenæus* was *Clemens Alexandrinus*, who says himself that he was intimate with him, and that he was a scholar of *Pantænus*, who had seen some of the Apostles, and was the disciple of others. *Eusebius* observes, that he affirms, in the first book of his *Stromata*, that he was next to the immediate successors of the Apostles\*; meaning, no doubt, that he succeeded his master *Pantænus* in the catechetical school at *Alexandria*; though he had taught in it long before that, and probably supplied *Pantænus's* place

\* *Euseb. Hist. Eccles. l. vi. c. 13.*

during



during his absence in *India*. He was likewise Presbyter of the church of Alexandria, at least about the beginning of *Severus's* reign; for, as such, *Eusebius* takes notice of him in the year 195; about which time he published his book called *Stromata*, or miscellaneous discourses; though he lived long enough to withdraw from Alexandria to Jerusalem, during the time of the persecution under *Severus*, at the beginning of the next century.

From this illustrious writer we have one of the fairest testimonies we can have, both of the Saviour's divinity, and, conjointly with that, of the worship that was then paid to him by the christian church; for, in his exhortation to the Gentiles, he styles him the "Living God, who was worshipped and adored;" and then calls upon the unbeliever in the strongest terms of the orthodox faith: "Believe, O man, in him who is both man and God: believe, O man, in him who suffered death, and yet is adored as the Living God\*."

In his *Pædagogus*, likewise, he not only witnesses to the common practice of the Christians in those days, but also addresses himself in prayer to the Son, together with the Father: "Be merciful to thy children, O Master, O Father, thou Ruler of Israel, O Son and Father, who are both

\* Elem. Protræptic. p. 84. Oxon. Ed.

one, our Lord \*.” And, as if all this were not enough to express his sense of the catholic faith concerning the Godhead of Jesus Christ, he concludes the book with a doxology to the whole and undivided Trinity : “ Let us give thanks to the only Father and Son, to the Son and the Father, to the Son our teacher and master, together with the Holy Spirit ; One in all respects, in whom are all things ; whose is the glory and the ages, whose is the perfect good, the perfect beauty, all-wise, and all-just ; to whom be glory, both now and for ever. Amen †.”

In the same work he sets down the very words in which the whole church were used to praise God in this form : ἀνθύντες τῷ μονῷ πατρὶ, καὶ υἱῷ, σὺν τῷ ἁγίῳ πνεύματι : praising the Father, and the Son, with the Holy Ghost. Some indeed have attributed the composition of this eucharistical form to the rise of the Arian Heresy : but it is evident that it was used, long before that heresy arose, in the public service of the church ; for the Arians are sharply reprov'd by the orthodox fathers of that time, for having altered this ancient form into, Glory be to the Father, by the Son, and in the Holy Ghost ‡ : for *Eusebius* tells us, that *Paulus Samosatenus* was condemned for suppressing such hymns as were made in honor of Christ, as

\* Clem. Pædagog. l. iii. c. 12.

† Ib. Vid. etiam Strom. l. vii. c. 7.

‡ Vid. Theod. l. ii. c. 24.

if they were the composition of men of late days; whereas, says he, there were various psalms and hymns composed by Christians in the very earliest days, wherein they joined in celebrating Christ the word of God, by attributing divinity to him\*.

*Clemens Alexandrinus* has a famous hymn, which was probably taken from the chantings that were used in the primitive church, or at least composed in imitation of them: and of these chantings or hymns there is a remarkable testimony of *Caius*, a Presbyter in the next age, preserved by *Eusebius*, against the allegation of *Artemon*, that they written by the faithful from the beginning; and celebrate the divinity of Christ, the word of God.

*Basil*, too, mentions a sacred hymn, which he ascribes to *Athenogenes*, a martyr, towards the latter end of this century. Whether it was the hymn that we find in the Constitutions †, called there the evening hymn, is uncertain; and *Basil* himself does not pretend to determine: it was, however, by his account of it, a hymn expressly addressed to Christ, and contained a doxology to the whole Trinity: "We laud the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit of God ‡." It is certain that what *Basil* quotes out of that ancient hymn, which was

\* Euseb. l. v. c. 28. † Euseb. loc. citat.

† Constit. l. vii. c. 48.

‡ Basil. de Spirit. Sanct. t. ii. c. 29.



used at the first setting up of lights, is found likewise in the evening hymn, and therefore probably it is the same. It runs thus: "O Jesus Christ, thou joyful light of the sacred glory of the immortal, heavenly, holy, blessed Father! we now being come to the setting of the sun, and seeing the evening light, do laud and praise the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit of God.—Thou art worthy to have hymns at all times sung unto thee, with holy voices, O son of God, that givest life; therefore the world glorifies thee."

Nothing can be more expressive of the sense of the church in the first ages, than the use of this hymn; whether, as some have supposed, it was directed for public devotions; or, as others, composed only for private use: for in this surely neither the governors of the church, nor the pious members of it, would have misled their disciples and followers, by such an example, in the intricate mazes of *error* and *idolatry*.

I might mention the venerable names of several other writers in this century, such as *Miltiades*, and *Tatian*, and *Theophilus*, in all whose books (as *Eusebius* argues from a certain author, whose work was extant in his time, against the heresy of *Artemon*), the divinity, and consequently the worship, of Christ, is established; but I shall close the whole with the ample testimony of that great luminary of the Latin church, the eloquent

*Tertullian*.



*Tertullian*.—The severe calamities which the Christians suffered during the reign of *Marcus Aurelius Antoninus*, engaged him to write his *Apology* in defence of their doctrine and practice. At this time the defenders of paganism brought all the most horrid calumnies and imputations, that could be devised, against the professors of christianity; and by these the Emperor was led away to such a degree, as to suffer many destructive cruelties to be inflicted upon them. Among other charges, of a very serious nature, these enemies to the christian faith revived that old one, which had been often urged before—that of their invoking and worshipping a man who had been condemned to die. This *Tertullian* undertakes to answer, as it was before answered, but in somewhat stronger terms: “They worshipped Christ,” he replied, “because they knew him to be the true natural son of God, by spiritual generation; and therefore called God, and the Son of God, because he was of one and the same essence or substance.—In that manner he was begotten of God, so as to be God, and the son of God; and they were both one \*.”

In another part of his work, he makes use of this argument, among others, to dissuade christian women from marrying unbelievers: “In such a mixed family, what mention could

\* *Tertul.* *Apol.* c. xxi.

there be of God? what invocation of Christ? where the cherishing of faith by their joint reading of the scriptures \*?" implying, that it was as much their duty to call upon Christ in their family-devotions, as to keep up the remembrance of God, or to be instructed in the word of God. But still he maintains that they invoked no other than the eternal, true, and living God †: such then they must believe Christ to be, and that it was their duty to make their supplications to him accordingly; otherwise such an argument, brought against the worshippers of false Gods, would have been justly retorted against them with full force; for they never declined the charge by pretending to deny that they worshipped Christ: they admitted its truth, but they denied that they were guilty of idolatry upon this account; for they professed to worship him, as being the eternal, living, and true God, inasmuch as he was the eternal son of the eternal Father.

I cannot conclude my account of the writers who flourished in this century, without observing, that several of them have confirmed their doctrine of the divinity of Christ, and in consequence defended their worship of him, both in

\* Tertul. ad Uxorem, l. ii. c. 6.

† Apol. cap. xxxii. There is a most excellent account given of the christian worship and prayers in the 39th chapter.

their

their public services, and in their private devotions, by those very Texts of Scripture, which the adversaries of our own times would either pervert by a different interpretation, or have the effrontery to deny that they were ever so applied \*.

Thus in the Epistle which is ascribed to *Barnabas*, and is indeed quoted by *Clemens Alexandrinus* as such, both in his *Stromata*, yet extant, and in his last books of *Hypotyposes* †, and by others, under the title of his Catholic Epistle, though *Eusebius* says, it is acknowledged by some, among the Scriptures of the New Testament, and contradicted by others ‡; we meet with this remarkable expression—"Behold! again, Jesus, not the son of man, but of God, made manifest in the flesh §: Ἐν σαρκὶ φανερωθεὶς: which is perfectly consonant to those words of St. Paul, as referred to Christ, 1 Tim. iii. 16. Θεὸς ἐφανερώθη ἐν σαρκί, *God was manifested in the flesh*: And that they must be referred to Christ,

\* Dr. Lardner has made a copious collection of the several quotations and allusions which he found in the primitive Fathers, in support of the credibility of the Gospel-History: but it is remarkable, that he has scarcely produced a passage, that might confirm the Scripture-doctrine of the divinity of Jesus Christ.

† Vid. Coteler. Test. V. P. P.

‡ Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. vi. c. 13, 14.

§ Ep. Barn. § 12.

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and not to the *mystery of godliness*, or the Gospel, as some would interpret them, I need not undertake to prove: *Whitby* has sufficiently proved this, in his notes on the verse. It is plain that *Barnabas* understood it thus, and so did several of the fathers in the following ages.

*Clemens Romanus*, in his second Epistle to the Corinthians, has the like expression: "Our one Lord Jesus Christ, who has saved us, being first a Spirit, was made flesh (or *manifested in the flesh*), and so called us. Let us therefore give praise unto him, not only with our mouths, but with all our souls; that he may receive us as children: for so the Lord hath said, They are my brethren who do the will of my father\*." He concludes this Epistle, "Wherefore let us every hour expect the kingdom of God in love and righteousness: because we know not the day of *God's* appearing."

In his first Epistle, which has never been called in question, he exhorts the Corinthians to the duty of humility by the example of Christ, upon the same principle that St. Paul had used to the Philippians, his voluntary debasement of himself from his pre-existent state of glory. "Our Lord Jesus Christ, who is the sceptre of the majesty of God, came not in the shew of pride and arrogance, as he might have done, but in humi-

Clem. Ep. ii. § 9. 12.

lity,



lity, as the Holy Ghost had before spoken concerning him \*." This is perfectly similar to St. Paul's argument on the same occasion, Philip. ii. 6. *Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God, but made himself of no reputation—humbled himself.* What St. Paul calls, in the form of God, St. Clement expresses by the sceptre of his majesty†: What is in the former, He thought it not robbery to be equal with God, is in the latter, He came not, as he might have done, in the shew of pride and arrogance, but in humility. St. Paul recommends the example of the infinite condescension of Christ, inasmuch as, that when he was in the form of God, he did not vainly boast of his equality with God, for so the words in the original may signify, ἔχ' ἀρπαγμὸν ἡγήσατο τὸ εἶναι ἴσα θεῷ, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: and, in like manner, Clement recommends the same example, that Christ, though he was truly the sceptre of God's magnificence, yet, when he came among men, he did not assume, or discover his majesty. What St. Paul calls emptied himself, ἐκένωσεν ἑαυτὸν, that Clement expresses by ἐταπείνωφρόνησε, answering to our English version, he humbled himself.

\* Clem Ep. i. ad. Cor. § 16.

† Called by St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, the ἀπκνγασμα, the shining forth of his father's glory. Heb. i. 3.

If we compare this expression of St. Paul, He emptied himself, with that of *Thaddæus*, as it is quoted by Eusebius \*, ἐσμίκρυνεν ἑαυτὸν τὴν θεότηλα, he lessened, or made a diminutive shew of his Godhead; they mutually explain each other, and form together a solid proof, that the divinity of Christ was, in the Apostolical age, one of the principal articles of the christian faith. The preaching of *Thaddæus* was, as *Valesius* computes, in the very year of Christ's death—most certainly, not long after.

The second Epistle of St. *Clement* has not been so universally received for genuine as the first: but yet it bears such evident marks of similarity, both in expression and sentiment, with the first, that it can scarcely, one would be apt to think, be doubted to be his. Whose-ever it was, *Basil* has quoted a passage from it, though it is not to be found in the fragment which is come down to us: "God liveth, the Lord Jesus Christ liveth, and the Holy Spirit liveth †:" in the same sense, undoubtedly, as the Scripture calls God *the living God*, eternal, immortal; to distinguish him from those dead idols of the heathens, whom they worshipped; and implying, that the living God, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, ought alone to be worshipped and adored. He begins this second Epistle with an exhortation, that may lead

\* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. i. c. 13.

† Basil. Lib. de Sp. Sanct. c. xxix.

us to such an interpretation of his words: "Brethren, we ought so to think of Jesus Christ, as of God, as of the judge of the quick and dead; nor should we think meanly of our salvation: for if we do think meanly of him, we shall hope only to receive some small things from him; and if we do so, we shall sin\*."

*Justin Martyr*, in his dialogue with *Trypho* the Jew, properly applies his own scripture to convince him, that Christ is to be worshipped, as in Psalm xliv. or xlv. v. 12, as it stands in our translation, *He is thy Lord God, worship thou him*: wherein the Psalmist prophetically points out the majesty of Christ's kingdom, and the duty of his church; proving from thence, that both God and Christ are to be worshipped†: and then he asks *Trypho*, "whether he knew any other mentioned in Scripture to be adored as Lord and God, besides the maker of this world, and Christ?"—wherein he shews, that both the one and the other is such. The same he proves from other Scriptures‡: but yet he teaches, in his *Apology*, that none but the *true* God is to be worshipped. The consequence is plain, as has been already observed—that he believed Christ to be the *true God*, and that, as such, he ought to be adored.

\* Clem. ii. § 1.

† Justin. Dial. p. 287. B; & p. 293. B. C.

‡ Ib. p. 294. C; & p. 302. B.



*Athenagoras*, in his *Apology*, alludes to that famous text in St. John, ch. x. 30, *I and my Father are one*; for thus he introduces it: "The Father and the Son being one, and the Son being in the Father, and the Father in the Son\*."

*Theophilus*, Bishop of *Antioch*, A. D. 181, quotes St. John, in his genuine books to *Autolycus*: "These things, says he, the Holy Scriptures teach us, and all who are moved by the Holy Spirit, among whom John says, *In the beginning was the word, and the word was with God*: shewing, that at the first God was alone, and, in him was the word. Then he says, *and the word was God*, &c†." And again, "For before that any thing was made, he had him for his Counsellor, being his understanding and wisdom. But when he determined to make those things about which he had taken counsel, he brought forth from himself this word, *the first born* of every creature‡."

*Irenæus* alledges the same Scripture, Ps. xlv. 6, 7, that is quoted by *Justin*: *thy Throne, O God, is for ever and ever*, &c. and then subjoins this comment upon it: "The spirit signifies both by the appellation of God, both him who is anointed, that is, the Son; and him who anoints, that is, the Father||." And in another place he quotes the testimony of St. Paul, Rom. ix. v. 5. in the very

\* Apol. i.

\* Athenag. Apol. p. 10.

† Theophil. ad Autolyc. l. ii. p. 100.

‡ Ibid.

|| Iren. l. iii. c. 6.



same manner, and in the same sense, in which we understand the Apostle to this day. For in order to prove against the hereticks of that time, that they could not think the Emmanuel to be a man only, he introduces this passage of Paul's concerning Israel: *Whose are the Fathers, and of whom, as concerning the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen.* By which he plainly acknowledges no other reading or construction besides the received one, which is followed by *Tertullian*\*, and others, in the subsequent ages†.

In another place‡, where he recites the creed, commonly called the symbol of faith, which the catholic church had received from the Apostles and their immediate disciples, he alludes to the Apostle's words, Philip. ii. 10, where he mentions "Christ, as our Lord and God, who by the will of God the Father would be adored by all, after the future resurrection; that every knee shall bow to Jesus Christ, our Lord, and God, and Sa-

\* Tertul. Lib. adv. Prax. c. viii. & xv.

† Cyprian, & Chrysostom, and Origen. Dr. Mill is greatly mistaken in saying, that no one that he knew of all the christian Fathers, who professedly collected all the texts of Scripture in proof of Christ's divinity, ever alledged this text before the year 380, and Gregory Nyssen the first of all. For Irenæus and Tertullian have certainly quoted it in this Century, and Athanasius before that time. But it is beyond my design to examine the opinions of modern critics upon this subject; that has been done abundantly by others.

‡ Iren. l. i. c. 2.

viour, and King, according to the good pleasure of the invisible father.”—Elsewhere he explains the reason of the gifts which the wise men offered to Christ—that they brought frankincense, in humble adoration, because he was God\*.

*Tertullian* likewise justifies our translation of St. Paul, Philip. ii. 6, in his book of the Resurrection of the Flesh, chap. vi. for these are his words: *Sermo enim Deus*, qui in effigie Dei constitutus existimavit *Parari* Deo: thought it not robbery to be equal with God. And again, in his book against *Praxeus*, chap. vii. & 22, saying, *I and my father are one*, he shews, that there were two, whom he joins together as equals (*quos æquat & jungit*).—But above all, *Tertullian* alludes, in the same book, against *Praxeas*, ch. xxv. to St. John’s famous Text, 1 John, v. 7, *Connexus patris in filio, & filii in paracleto tres efficit cohærentes alterum ex altero, qui tres Unum sunt, non unus*, answering exactly to the τὸ ἓν in the original: Not one Person but one Being. He adds, *Quonodo dictum est, Ego & Pater unum sumus, ad substantiæ unitatem, non ad numeri singularitatem*.

The Testaments of the twelve Patriarchs are supposed, by Dr. *Cave*, to have been written about the year A. D. 192. The Testament of *Simeon*, § 7, runs thus: “For the Lord shall raise up out

\* Iren. l. iii. c. 10.

of *Levi* an High-Priest, and out of *Judah* a King, *God and Man.*" That of *Benjamin*, § 10, "Then shall we also rise again, every one upon our Sceptre, adoring (προσκυνῶντες, falling down to) the King of the Heavens, who appeared upon earth in the form of man's humiliation, or in the form of a man of humiliation." Alluding to Philip. ii.

It would carry us too far to produce all the quotations and allusions from the Fathers of this Century to the texts in Scripture, in proof of this point. From what have been produced it sufficiently appears, that these primitive christians, who had been instructed by the Apostles, or their disciples, ascribed the divine nature to Christ; and that they were led to it by this argument, among others: that divine worship was, in express terms, ordered to be offered up to him. But they were taught by the same Scriptures, that such a worship as is divine, ought not to be given to any creature, however excellent; and therefore when it was directed to be given to Jesus Christ, it could be upon no other account than this—that he was *very God of very God.*

THE HISTORY OF THE  
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BY JOHN DE Witt  
IN TWO VOLUMES  
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## CENTURY III.

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I HAVE already mentioned, from the ancient author of the Constitutions, the hymns or chantings which were used in the daily service of the primitive church: and in this Century we meet with a remarkable testimony of them from *Caius* the Roman Presbyter; an eloquent writer, who lived in the latter end of the last, and the beginning of this Century, in his book against the heresy of *Artemon*; some fragments of which are preserved by *Eusebius*\*: For of these chantings or psalms he bears witness, "that they were written by the faithful from the beginning, and celebrate Christ the word of God, by attributing divinity unto him." For they invoked equally the three persons in the undivided Trinity: "We

\* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. v. c. 28.

laud the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Spirit of God." This ancient custom he alledges, to expose the novelty of that heresy which denied the divinity of Christ. The whole argument, as we find it, is worth relating; because it is so perfectly applicable to obviate the pretences, which now prevail, of this doctrine being a growing corruption of Christianity.

"They say, that all the ancients, and even the Apostles themselves, received and taught the same things which they now hold; and that the truth of the Gospel was preserved, till the time of *Victor*, the thirteenth Bishop of Rome from Peter; but by his successor (or from the time of his successor) *Zephyrine*, the truth has been corrupted. And possibly what they say might have been credited, if first of all the divine Scriptures did not contradict them: and then also, secondly, the writings of the brethren, more ancient than *Victor*, which they published in defence of the truth against the Gentiles, and against the heresies of their times;" mentioning *Justin*, *Miltiades*, *Tatian*, *Clement*, *Irenæus*, *Melito*, with a general appeal to many more not named, and to ancient hymns composed by the faithful, in honor of Christ. For the argument was good—if the Church have always used hymns and psalms in their solemn assemblies for public devotion, to the honor of Christ, as they did to the honor of God, then has Christ been always accounted God by

by the Church, as well as the Father. They are equally objects of divine worship, and therefore equally God. This proposition is converse.

This *Caius* was a strenuous asserter of the divinity of Jesus Christ, as appears both from that book called *the Labyrinth*, which was expressly written against the heresy of *Artemon*, who opposed the catholic doctrine of the church; and from another, inscribed, *Περὶ τοῦ παντός*, of the universe, wherein he maintains *the divinity of Christ, our true God*, and dwells upon his ineffable generation from the father.—He made himself eminent also by a famous disputation held at Rome, between him and *Proclus*, one of the heads of the Montanist-party, as *Eusebius*, who had read the account of it, published by *Caius* himself, informs us, wherein he overcame *Proclus*, and He, together with all the followers of that Sect, was excommunicated\*.

But to shew still further how universal this practice was throughout all the churches, we learn from the same *Eusebius*†, that *Nepos*, an Egyptian Bishop, though he had fallen into some errors concerning the millenium, composed some psalms and hymns for the use of the church in that part of the world, which were well received by all the brethren, as they were so fully expres-

\* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. Lib. vi. c. 30. See also Jerom. de Script. illust. in Caius.

† Euseb. l. 7. c. 24.



five of the divinity of Christ, and so properly addressed to him as God : insomuch that *Paulus Samosatenus*, the heretical Bishop of *Antioch*, tried to suppress them, by introducing others in their stead ; but the sense of the catholic church, in behalf of those which were used for the public worship of Christ, was sufficiently declared by the sentence which the counsel of *Antioch*, convened at this time for the purpose, passed upon *Paulus* for these his heretical principles : for, for this profane attack upon the divinity and worship of Christ, he was publicly arraigned, anathematized, and deposed \*.

At the same time lived *Dionysius*, Bishop of *Alexandria* ; styled, by the ancients, *Dionysius the Great*, upon account of his consummate wisdom and prudence, the most amiable disposition for moderation and candor, together with a profound learning in all the sciences. This eminent prelate recommended the hymns which *Nepos* had composed for the use of the Church, though he wrote against his other tenets ; and because he was disabled from attending the council at *Antioch*, by his great age and infirmities, he wrote Epistles to condemn publicly *Paulus Samosatenus* for having rejected these hymns † ; and he

\* Vid. Synod. Ep. Concil. Antioch. ap. Euseb. l. vii. c. 30.

† Euseb. l. vii. c. 27, &c.

himself



himself always used that form of doxology which had been in constant use from the very foundation of the christian church: "To God the Father, and the Son, our Lord Jesus Christ, with the Holy Spirit, be glory and dominion now and for ever, world without end. Amen."

In this century *Novatian*, a presbyter of the church of Rome (who, as *Valesius* thinks, was confounded with *Novatus* by *Eusebius*)\*, wrote a Treatise upon the Trinity, wherein he asserts the divine and human nature†; and makes it an argument for the belief of the former, "that if he were only a mere man, how could he be present every where, where-ever he is invoked, since this property of being present every where, is that of God, and not of man? And if he were only a mere man, why is he called upon, in our prayers, as Mediator; since the invoking of a man for salvation would be judged ineffectual? If Christ were a mere man only, why is our hope placed in him, since it would be a curse, rather than a blessing, if he were not God as well as man? for "curfed is the hope that is placed only in man."—This manner of reasoning will lead us fairly to this conclusion, as indisputable: that the church did then invoke Christ, as God, and that upon this persuasion—because he was

\* Vid. Vales. Not. Ed. Euseb. l. vi. c. 45.

† Novat. de Prin. c. xiv.

God; which justified them in trusting to him for the return of their prayers. This argument confirms both the doctrine of the church at that time, and its practice.

*Cyprian* was bishop of *Carthage* at this time; and from him we learn, that in that distant church too the same custom prevailed of praying to Christ, as Mediator, and as God; for in one of his Epistles he includes both. "First, says he, "we ought to pray to him, as Mediator; and then by him to God the father\*:" and that "upon this twofold account—because Jesus Christ is the advocate and intercessor for our sins, and because he is our Lord and our God."—In another part of his works, his book *De Bono Patientie*, p. 220, of the advantage of patience, he calls him the Lord God of Hosts, the God of the christians; and argues from hence, that God the father has commanded us to worship his son: for so St. Paul has left the command upon record; that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth. And St. John, in his Revelation, has delivered the same; for when he would have fallen down and worshipped the angel, but was forbidden to do it, the angel commanded, "*Worship the Lord Jesus.*" So *Cyprian* reads it; and therefore undoubtedly

\* *Cyprian. Ep. vii. al. ii.*

understood

understood *worship God*, as synonymous with the other.

In another part of this same book, he says, "The Lord Jesus, who is worshipped in heaven." And in an Epistle, which he wrote to *Lucius*, Bishop of *Rome*, who had been a confessor for the faith of Christ, he encourages him to persevere in his good confession, "because they of that church would not cease in their prayers to give thanks to God the Father, and Christ his Son, and to pray and supplicate for him, that He, who was himself perfect, and the author of perfection in others, would preserve and perfect in him the glorious crown of his confession\*." Indeed, we may observe in general, that St. *Cyprian* every where in his writings attributes the same perfections to Christ, as are, in the Scriptures, attributed to the true and supreme God.—In an Epistle to *Cæcilius* †, at the beginning, he styles him "our Lord and our God."—In his treatise *de Idolorum Vanitate*, p. 170, after mentioning his incarnation, he says, "God is joined with man: This is our God, This is our Christ."—But above all, if we want any thing still more explicit, his argument on the invalidity of baptism by heretics, if not duly performed in

\* *Cyprian. Ep. lviii. al. 61.*

† *Ep. xiii.*



the name of the Father, of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost jointly and equally, is an irrefragable proof of his belief in the Trinity, and of the divine worship that is due to each person in the Godhead.

*Arnobius* is another eminent African, who wrote seven books against the Gentiles, in order to convince the Bishop of *Picca* of the reality of his conversion: for they contain an ample and copious defence of the cause of Christianity. In this his vindication of the Christian worship, wherein he exposes, at the same time, the follies of the Pagan mode, he introduces the Heathens renewing their old charge against the adoration of Christ, which had been sufficiently confuted by *Justin Martyr* and others, that they made their supplications daily to one "who was born a Man, and was put to death upon the cross, the most infamous of all punishments, and inflicted only upon the vilest of men; and that they contended, that he was God, and believed that he was still alive." To which he answers by freely acknowledging the imputation, that "they did really worship him"; but that it was from their indubitable knowledge that he was the true God, and therefore were bound to worship him, as the head of their body. And should a ranting Gentile ask, Is Christ God? we answer, He is God, and God of the interior powers: that  
is,



is, the searcher of hearts, which is the sole prerogative of God \*."

But the fullest testimony for the worship of Christ, and the most complete answer to this stale objection of the Heathens, is to be found in the works of *Origen*; whom, though he flourished in the beginning of this century (he died A. D. 253, at a great age), yet I have reserved to the last, both because he gives the most copious attestation to the practice of the Christian Church at this time, and because he adds authority to every thing that has been advanced by others.

There are so many illustrious passages to this purpose in his books against *Celsus*, wherein he so often inculcates the divine, infinite, incomprehensible nature of the Word and Son of God, that to produce them all would be to transcribe the greatest part of the books themselves. Let it suffice to select only a few, which will serve to confirm the truth of what they are brought to establish—the practice of paying divine worship to Christ, as God.

Thus, in his first book against *Celsus*, speaking of the offerings which the wise men brought from the East, he remarks, that they were such as denoted their sense both of his Godhead and Manhood; viz. gold, as to a King; myrrh, as to one who was to die; and frankincense,

\* *Arnob. contr. Gent. l. i. p. 30 & 36.*

as to God; affirming by this his proper title to the divine adoration, which these wise men expressed; for this was always used to be signified by the oblation of frankincense in their holy rites.

In his fifth book, he dwells more frequently upon the worship that was paid to Christ, as due to his divine nature, in exclusion of all created beings in heaven or in earth. He tells his opponent, "that Christians were not allowed to worship angels; but they might, and did worship the Son of God." And when he is giving him the reason why they directed their adoration to the Son of God, not to the sun, moon, or stars, he argues, "that it did not become them, who had learned, that the Wisdom or Son of God was that true light, the light of the world, the splendor of eternal light, infinitely transcending every thing they saw, to pay that divine homage to the lights of heaven, which they were taught to pay only to the intelligent Light, who is so much exalted above every creature."

A little after, he illustrates this point still further.—"As those worshippers of the sun, moon, and stars, would not adore a spark of fire, or a candle, whilst they behold incomparably more excellent lights, which they esteem worthy of adoration: so they, who understand how God is light, and how his Son is the true light, which lighteth every one that cometh in-  
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to the world, and understand likewise that saying of his, "I am the light of the world," would undeservedly adore, as it were, a little spark of the true light, if it be compared to that light which is God, as it exists in the sun, moon, and stars. Not that we therefore condemn those wonderful works of God, but because we would acknowledge the super-excellent divinity of God, and of his only begotten Son, which is far above all other things."

What can we conclude from hence, but that, as his argument requires, we should look upon the sun, moon, and stars, as contemptible things, when they are proposed as objects of our adoration, however excellent they may be in themselves; and that we should account God the Father, and his only begotten Son, as alone worthy of this divine honor?

After having established these premises, and the omnipresence of the Son of God, although he had vouchsafed to dwell in our nature, he argues for the worship of God the Father, and his only begotten Son, rejecting the adoration of the heavenly lights, in this manner: "It would be absurd, when he who fills heaven and earth (saying, *Do not I fill heaven and earth?*) is always near unto us (for we believe him, who says, *I am a God at hand, and not a God afar off*), to seek after sun, moon, or star, which is not always or



every where present, to whom you would pay your vows."

In the same book he expressly declares, "all prayers and supplications, intercessions and thanksgivings, are poured forth to God, the Lord of all, through the High-Priest, who is greater than all Angels, the living Word, and God. And we are to make our supplications also to the Word himself, to make intercessions to him, to give thanks to him, and to offer up our prayers to him."—This he repeats again in lib. viii. where he at large defends the worship of Christ against that trite objection, which *Celsus* takes up, that the Christians worshipped one who had but lately appeared in the world. To which *Origen* replies, not by denying the fact, for that was notorious, but by defending the practice upon this ground, "that the Father and Son were but one God; and that therefore if *Celsus* had but understood the meaning of what Christ says, "*I and my Father are One*;" or what the Son of God says in his prayer, "*As I and Thou art One*," he would never have imagined that we worship any but the God who is over all; for he says, "*the Father is in me, and I in the Father*." We therefore worship one God, as I have shewed, the Father and the Son: and our reasoning still remains in full force against others: neither do we give divine honor to an upstart Being, as if he had no existence before, for we believe him



him when he says, "*Before Abraham was, I am.*" —We worship one God and his only Son, and word, and image, with supplications and prayers to the utmost of our power, offering up our prayers to God over all by his only begotten Son, to whom we first present them; beseeching him, who is the propitiation for our sins, as our high-priest, to convey our prayers and sacrifices and intercessions to God, the Lord of all things;—for we worship the Father whilst we adore the Son, who is his word, and wisdom, and truth, and righteousness, and whatever else we are taught to believe of the Son of God, begotten of such a father\*." It was impossible to set this argument in its full strength without reciting thus much of it. What cavils have been raised against it by *Huetius* and others are completely answered, and the whole sufficiently defended by Bishop *Bull*\*."

But *Origen* not only justifies the common practice of all true Christians in this respect; he likewise, in other parts of his works, gives us his own directory, or a form of his private prayers to Jesus Christ. Thus, he repeats one of his pious addresses to him: "O Lord Jesu, grant that I may deserve to have some monument of me in thy tabernacle. I could wish to offer gold, or silver, or precious stones, with the princes of the

\* *Origen*, l. 8. p. 386.

† *Vid. Bull. Def. Nic. Fid.* p. 120 & seq.

people: but because these things are above me, let me at least be thought worthy to have goat's hair in the tabernacle of God, only that I may not in all things be found empty and unfruitful\*."

In another Homily, he gives us the sense he had of his own duty: "I ought to invoke my Lord Jesus, that when I seek he would grant me to find, and when I knock, that he may open to me†." And in another he exhorts others to it: "Let us pray from our hearts to the Word of God, who is the only begotten of the Father, and who reveals him to whom he will, that he would vouchsafe to reveal these things to us also‡." He concludes a Homily upon Jeremiah thus: "being purified from sin before our departure out of this world, we may be saved through Jesus Christ, to whom be glory and power for ever and ever. Amen||."

But above all others is that passage in his Commentary on the Epistle to the Romans, the most remarkable, inasmuch as it proves Christ to be God, because he was called upon in prayer; and at the same time establishes the fact, that he was called upon in prayer, because he is God, for both points are included in his reasoning. "The Apostle," says he, "in those words, 1 Cor. i. 2,

\* Orig. Hom. xiii. in Exod. xxv.

† Orig. Hom. v. in Levit.

‡ Hom. xxvi. in Numer.

|| Hom. ii. in Jerem.

*With all that in every place call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, declares him to be God, whose name was called upon. And if to call upon the name of the Lord, and to adore God, be one and the self-same thing, then, as Christ is called upon, so is he to be adored: and as we offer to God the first fruit of all prayers, so must we also to the Lord Jesus Christ; and as we offer supplications to the Father, so do we also to the Son; and as we offer thanksgivings to God, so do we offer thanksgivings to our Saviour. For the Holy Scripture teaches us, that the same honor is to be given to both, that is, to God the Father and the Son, when it says, that they may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father\*."*

Gregory, Bishop of *Neocæsarea*, surnamed *Thaumaturgus*, from the various miracles which he is said to have wrought, was a scholar of *Origen*; and after his pupilage was ended, he wrote him an eucharistical panegyric, wherein after having said, that God the Father could not be sufficiently praised by any of his creatures, he subjoins, "let us now turn our praises and hymns to the Son of God, the truth, the wisdom, the power of his Father; who is in the Father, and truly united to him; whom God the Father has made One with himself, who finally subsists as God the word in God himself†." In what remains of his works there is an ample confession of his Faith, or a

\* *Origen. in Rom. x; Lib. viii. p. 587.*

† *Ap. Op. Greg. Thaumaturg. Ed. Paris.*



creed, which he framed for the use of his church, in which he declared his unfeigned belief in the divinity of God the Son, and the Holy Ghost. St. *Basil* records and defends that formulary of doxology, in which the whole Trinity was glorified by the churches under his government; and adds, that the same mode of doxology, which *Gregory* had instituted, and was handed down by undoubted authority, was still observed by the Church\*.

In this Century, as in the foregoing, we meet with several quotations from the Scriptures which the oppugners of the doctrine of the Trinity, and consequently of the worship which has been paid to every divine person in it, have pretended were never quoted by the primitive writers, much less in the sense which the advocates for that doctrine and that practice have maintained. It is the more extraordinary, that they should still persist in such an assertion, and call this a novel doctrine, or even a corruption of Christianity, when they must know, if they have read any of their works, that we have abundant testimony in every age to confute them.

*Novatian*, for instance, who though a schismatic in some respects, yet was thoroughly orthodox in this, has quoted our Saviour's words in St. John, as a proof of his Divinity. "If," says he, "Christ were only a Man, how could he say, *I and my Father*

\* *Basil. de Sp. Sanct. ad Anphiloch. c. xxix.*



*are One?* For how is it, I and my Father are one, [unum] if he be not both Son and God? who may therefore be said to be One, as he is from him, and as he is his Son, and as he is begotten of him, and as he came from him, by which he is very God\*.”

In his 13th chapter, where he quotes several places from the New Testament, the following passage cannot but be admired, as singularly pertinent in its reasoning: “Whereas it is the property of none but God to know the secrets of the heart, and yet Christ *knows what is in man*: whereas it is in the power of none but God to forgive sins, yet Christ does forgive sins: whereas it is of no man to come down from Heaven, and yet he descended from thence: whereas no man could utter that saying, *I and my Father are One*; and Christ alone, from a consciousness of his Divinity, said it: and whereas, finally, the Apostle Thomas, furnished as he was with every proof of Christ’s Divinity, said in answer to him, *My Lord and my God*: whereas the Apostle St. Paul writes in his Epistle, *Whose are the Fathers, and from whom, according to the flesh, Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for evermore*: whereas the same Apostle declares, that he was made *such, not by men, or through man, but through Jesus Christ*: whereas he contends that he learned the Gospel,

\* Novat. Lib. de Trin. c. xxiii.

not of men, but by Jesus Christ: upon all these accounts we must conclude, that Christ is God."

*Cyprian* abounds in many parts of his works with quotations to this purpose, both from the Old and New Testaments; but his use of that famous text of St. John, 1 Ep. v. 7, the authenticity of which has been so much questioned, and its application by any of the primitive writers denied, is of all others the most in point. This text he professedly cites twice in his works. In his book *de Unitate Ecclesiæ*, towards the conclusion, in so many words: "Of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, it is written, *These three are One*\*. So far is it from being true, what we hear perpetually suggested, that these words were inserted into St. John's text after the Arian controversy was set on foot; for *Cyprian* was dead before that time†.

In his Epistle to *Jubaianus*‡, he proves that baptism, administered in the name of Jesus Christ only, is invalid, from the command of our Saviour to baptize all nations in the whole and undivided Trinity: without a solemn invocation of these three persons, Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, he continually argues, that the baptism could be of no effect; he calls it heretical, and insisted upon a re-baptism, wherever the name of one of

\* *Cyprian*, de Unit. Eccles. c. iv.

† It is probable that he suffered martyrdom, A. D. 258.

‡ Ep. Lxxiii.

them was omitted.—The passage of this Epistle, wherein he disputes so warmly against the admission of those into the Church who had not been baptized according to this original form, is very remarkable.—“If,” says he, “a man can be baptized by heretics (i. e. effectually), he may likewise obtain remission of sins: if he may obtain remission of sins, he may be sanctified, and be made the Temple of God. I ask, of what God? If it be said of God the Creator, he cannot be his Temple without believing in him. If of Christ, it is impossible, who believes not Christ to be God. If of the Holy Ghost, seeing these *three are one*, how can the Holy Spirit be reconciled to him, who is at enmity either with the Father or the Son?”

It is pretended by some, who want to support a weak cause by every argument they can invent, that when *Cyprian* cites that famous text of St. Paul, Rom. ix. 5, *Christ came, who is over all, God blessed for ever. Amen*: he leaves out the word *God*, in his book against the Jews\*. But if they would have consulted either *Manutius* or *Morellius*, they might have found the word *Deus* in their copies, and that it was likewise in both the manuscripts which *Pamelius* used. Indeed, *Cyprian's* reason for producing the text, obliges us to believe that he produced it entire; for it was to prove *quod Deus Christus*; and he must have been a bad reasoner indeed, if

\* Cyp. l. ii. adv. Jud. cap. v.



he had omitted the only word that could prove his point. But his master *Tertullian* had applied the same text to the same purpose, and it is not likely that he should differ from him in so material a doctrine. *Tertullian's* words are express, Solum autem Christum potero Deum dicere, sicut idem Apostolus: ex quibus Christus, qui est (inquit) *Deus* super omnia benedictus in ævum omne \*. *Erasmus* catches at this omission in *Cyprian*, and mentions the like in *Hilary* on the cxxiid Psalm: but he confesses that it may have been owing to the negligence of transcribers. With respect to *Hilary*, there can be no doubt how he understood it; for in his books *de Trinitate*, he has clearly expressed himself: Non ignorat Paulus Christum Deum, dicens, Quorum sunt patres, & ex quibus Christus, qui est super omnia Deus. Non hic creatura in Deum deputatur, sed creaturarum Deus est, qui super omnia Deus est. Nevertheless, *Erasmus* confesses too, that if it is to be interpreted of a benediction to God the Father, for the many peculiar blessings bestowed upon the nation of the Jews, still it may include, as various other such benedictions do in the Scripture, the whole Trinity in this act of devotion.

*Cyprian* moreover quotes the Epistle to the Philippians, ch. ii. ver. 5, 6, in exact agreement with our English version, Non rapinam ar-

\* Tertul. adv. Prax.



bitratus est esse se æqualem Deo; *thought it not robbery to be equal with God*: signifying plainly, that Christ, as he was originally in the form of God, could think, without arrogance, and without any injury done to the dignity of God the Father, that he was essentially equal with God, though he afterwards emptied himself, that is, of that divine majesty which he had before, or made himself of no reputation, appearing beneath his native dignity, and taking upon him the human nature.

*Cyprian* proves from Rev. xxi. v. 6, 7\*, that the Father is eternal; and he also interprets this of Christ, proving his eternity from his divinity. It is true indeed, that throughout this whole book of Revelation, *He that sat upon the throne*, and the *Lamb*, are distinguished from each other: but yet in chap. xx. ver. 11, 12, None but Christ can be understood, as sitting upon the throne, and judging the world, and therefore here too, *He that sat upon the throne*, ver. 5, and *He that called himself Alpha and Omega*, ver. 6, may well be understood of Jesus Christ, the Son of God.

*Dionysius Romanus* proves his eternity and divinity from the expression of his being *in the Father*, as his word, his wisdom, and his power, upon these first principles of Theology, that "whatever is in God, is God; and then, " what-

\* Lib. ii. c. 5. adv. Jud.

ever is God is eternal. But Christ says of himself, *I am in the Father*, ergo, &c \*."

His name-fake *Dionysius*, Bishop of Alexandria, who was co-temporary with him, and is called by *Eusebius*, *Basil* and others, *the Great*, has an allusion to St. Paul's expression, just now mentioned, in his epistle against *Paulus Samosatenus* †, for he speaks of Christ, "*as God over all, our refuge*:" and in another page (290), "*who is God over all, the Lord and God of Israel, Jesus Christ*:" and again, in another page (284), he speaks of the "*Holy Spirit, appearing in the shape of a dove*."

We may well expect to meet with many citations from the Scriptures in *Origen's* works, who collated so many versions of the Old Testament with the original, and wrote so many commentaries and homilies upon the Gospels and Epistles: we have already quoted some in proof of our main point, and it would be endless to produce all ‡.—In his first book against *Celsus*, he says, "that the gifts, which the wise men brought in adoration of Christ, were symbolical of his compound nature, divine and human: gold, as to a King; myrrh, as to one who was to die; and frankincense, as to God:" as having divine worship due to him; of which frankin-

\* Ap. Athan. in lib. de Synod. Nic. Decret.—Ex Epist. Dionys. contr. Sabellianos.

† Bibl. P. tom. ii. p. 289.

‡ See page 67.

cense was always reckoned the outward and visible sign.

Again, He distinguishes the divine and human nature from the words of Christ himself. We believe Jesus, speaking of the divinity that was in him, *I am the way, and the truth, and the life*: but speaking of his humanity, thus; *Now ye seek to kill me, a man, who have told you the truth from the beginning*.—Origen argued too for the divinity of Christ, as *Dionysius Romanus* did, from his other words, *I am in the Father*. And thus both the Ante-nicene and Post-nicene Fathers commonly argued from the same text.

Origen likewise proves Christ to be God from his being called upon in prayer (and from the work of our salvation; for who else could save us, and bring the soul to God, but God the word \*?); for the Apostle, says he, in those words, 1 Cor. i. 2, *With all that call on the name of the Lord Jesus Christ*, declares him to be God whose name was called upon †. For if to call upon the name of the Lord, and to worship God, be one and the self-same thing; then as Christ is called upon, so is he worshipped, as God.

I shall close this Century with the testimony of *Lucian* the martyr, as he is called, Presbyter of the church of *Antioch*, who suffered in the persecution under *Maximinus*; one of great eminence

\* Origin. contr. Cels. l. vi.

† Com. in Rom. x. lib. 8.

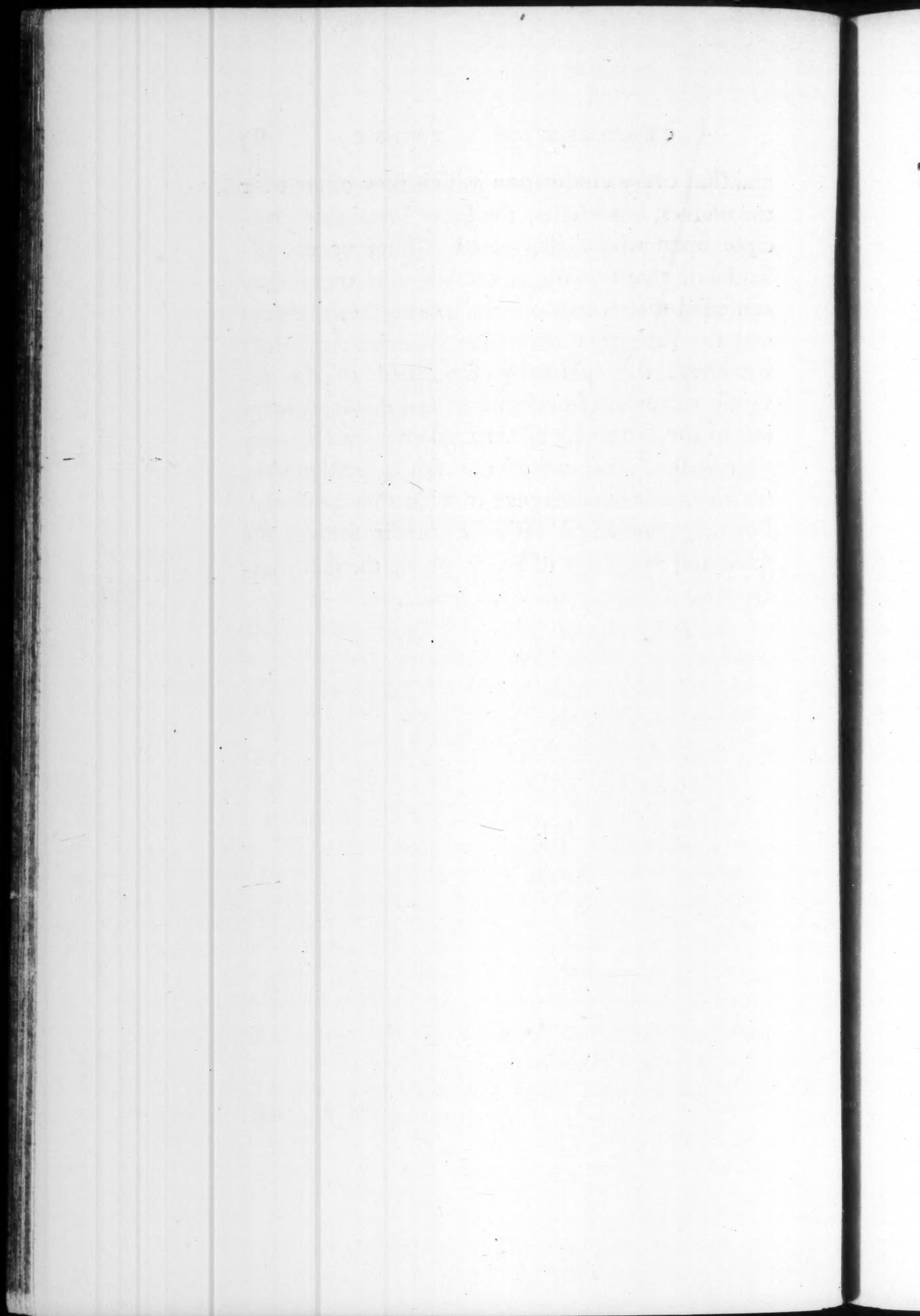


in the Church for his knowledge of the Scriptures, and zeal for religion. He has left a creed, as it is preserved by *Athanasius* \*, wherein, after declaring his belief “in one God the Father, and in our Lord Jesus Christ, his only begotten Son; God, by whom all things were made;” he goes on to describe his nature more fully, in allusions to several expressions in holy scripture—“The express image of his father’s divinity, substance, power, and glory: the first-born of every creature; who was in the beginning with God; God the word, as it is said in the Gospel; *and the word was God: by whom all things were made, and in whom all things subsist*: who in these last days came down from Heaven, and was born of the Virgin, according to the Scriptures.—And in the Holy Spirit, who is given to all for consolation, and sanctification, and consummation; as our Lord Jesus Christ commanded his disciples, saying, *Go and teach all nations, baptizing all in the name of the Father, and Son, and Holy Spirit.*”

Hitherto we may observe, that every accusation which was brought against the tenets or the practice of the primitive Christians, by their adversaries, was the same in substance with that which *Pliny* found to be alledged against them from the beginning; and is a proof in point, that they all along worshipped Christ as God;

\* Lib. de Synod. Arim. & Selenc. tom. i. p. 392; & Socrat. Hist. Eccles. l. ii. c. 10.

and that every vindication which they offered for themselves, manifested the same invariable principle upon which they acted. They never dissembled, that the allegation was not true; they confessed their deeds openly before their judges; and for this good confession, which they boldly witnessed, they patiently submitted to the severest tortures of persecution and death; glorying in the bitterness of martyrdom; which, they were well assured, would not fail to be their lot, for their steady adherence to what they professed. For they generally breathed out their souls in the spirit and language of St. Stephen, the first martyr—*Lord Jesus, receive our spirits.*





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## C E N T U R Y   I V.

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**A**T the very beginning of this Century, when the persecution under *Dioclesian* raged the hottest, and martyrdoms of the most cruel kind increased daily, *Lactantius* undertook the defence of oppressed Christianity, in a very elegant work, consisting of seven books, which he called *Divine Institutions*: and though it is probable, that at this time he knew but little of the Scriptures, yet he strenuously defended the catholic doctrine.—In the first book he treats of the *false Religion*, wherein he proves a Providence; and next, that there is but one God, who made and governs the world; confuting, as he goes along, the Religion of the Gentiles, and shewing, by various arguments, that the deities which they worshipped, were altogether unworthy of

the title. In the fourth book, he treats of *the true Wisdom*, wherein he displays the true knowledge of Christ, both as to his divine and human nature: and inquires, with great acuteness, how it is, that the confessing of both Father and Son to be God, can consist with the Unity of the Godhead.

When he is upon this subject, he introduces the old objection, which had been always cast as a reproach upon the christians; that, as they professed to worship only one God, how was it that they likewise, in fact, worshipped a mere man, and one who had been put to an ignominious death by men: to which he replies, "When we mention God the Father, and God the Son, we do not speak of any thing diverse from each other, nor do we disjoin one from the other: for neither can he be a Father without the Son, nor can the Son be divided from the Father: forasmuch as neither can the Father be called so without the Son, nor can the Son be begotten without the Father. Since then the Father makes the Son, and the Son makes the Father, there is one Mind, one Spirit, and one Substance to both—two persons and one God; therefore both to be worshipped alike, and that, without the imputation of worshipping two Gods, whilst we profess to worship only one." This is implied, indeed it is included, in Lactantius's argument, or it can mean nothing in answer to the objection. This unity of substance

stance he illustrates by the sun and its rays, or a fountain and its streams: which is an illustration that many of the primitive fathers have adopted.

When baptism was at first instituted by our Lord, he commanded it to be universally administered in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost; which was understood to be a solemn rite of initiation into the faith, service, and worship of the three persons in the holy Trinity, as the only true and living God, of equal divinity, equal authority, and therefore as equally objects of divine adoration. Thus the first Christians understood it, and thus it had been religiously observed to that time, or the Heretics would not have taken the pains to persuade their followers to alter the regular form, that they might, by such means, corrupt the doctrine.

Accordingly *Epiphanius* tells us, that in his time, which was in this fourth Century, they began to baptize in the name of the Father uncreate, the Son created by the Father, and the Holy Ghost created by the Son\*. And at other times, they interpreted the form, as we shall see afterwards they did the doxology, to suit their own purpose, which they now began to forward with all their might, in the name of the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Ghost. Thus the *Paulianists*,

\* Epiphan. Hæres. lxxvi.

who were disciples of *Paulus Samosatenus* the Bishop of *Antioch*, in the third Century, found themselves obliged (as they denied the divinity of Christ), in support of their peculiar tenets, essentially to change the usual form of baptism, though they wanted to save appearances under the disguise. The council of *Nice* however opposed the attempt, and expressly ordered, as necessary to stop the Heresy, that all those who had been thus baptized by these insinuating heretics, should be re-baptized: adjudging their former baptism to be irregular and void.

To guard against the influence of these innovations in the catholic faith, as much as they could, it was become a prudent custom in the primitive church, to instruct the catechumens, previously to their baptism, in the doctrine of the Trinity more especially\*, that they might not be in danger of falling into those errors which might disqualify them from becoming members of the true Church of Christ, or disgrace their profession after they had been thus solemnly admitted into it, by any unworthy conceptions of their Lord and Master. Therefore the Apostolical Constitution requires, that the Bishop should always *invoke* over them who are baptized, the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost severally, upon pain of being deposed if he did not†. And besides

\* V. Apost. Constit. l. vii. c. 39; & Jerom. Ep. xxxviii,

† Apost. An. l. iii, c, 16,

this,



this, the baptism was declared null and void without it: for the person so baptized, says *Athanasius*, that is, in the name of one person only in the sacred Trinity, is still uninitiated\*.

That the persons in the Godhead might not be confounded in the invocation of each prayer, the third council of Carthage, A. D. 397, made a decree, *ut nemo in precibus vel patrem pro filio, vel filium pro patre nominet*, that no one might change the name of the Father for the Son, or of the Son for the Father†.

And lest all this should not be enough to preserve the true faith, as it was originally collected from Christ's commission, from being corrupted or lost, the ancient Church had introduced a significant custom, which, one would have thought, might have preserved it effectually: that of the trine immersion at baptism; whereby the person, being thrice dipped, which was the usage of those times, at the mention of each person in the Trinity, was supposed to be completely baptized in the full belief of that article of the christian faith.

*Tertullian* mentions this practice more than once. "We are dipped," says he, "not once, but thrice, at the naming of the three persons, and in the name of the three persons‡." But St. *Am-*

\* Athan. Ep. ad. Serap. tom. I. p. 204.

† Carthag. Concil. iii. Can. 23.

‡ Tertul. Advers. Prax. and again—in Lib. de Ceron. Milito. c. iii.

*brose*, in this Century, explains it still more fully : “Thou wast asked at thy baptism, Dost thou believe in God the Father Almighty? And thou didst reply, I believe, and wast dipped. A second time thou wast asked, Dost thou believe in Jesus Christ our Lord? Thou didst answer again, I believe, and wast dipped. A third time the question was repeated, Dost thou believe in the Holy Ghost? And the answer was, I believe : then thou wast dipped the third time\*.”

*Jerom* likewise explains the practice of trine immersion, which he derives, as do both *Tertulian* and *Basil*†, from Apostolical tradition, and still retained in the Church, to the same purpose : for he makes the ceremony to be a symbol of the Unity, as well as of the Trinity. “We are thrice dipped in the water,” says he, “that the mystery of the Trinity may appear to be but one. We are not baptized in the *names* of Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, but in *one name*, which is God. And therefore though we be thrice put under water, to represent the mystery of the Trinity, yet it is reputed but one baptism‡ !”

The least that we can conclude from these testimonies is, that either we are thus solemnly devoted to the worship of them, who by nature are no Gods, but mere creatures, or non-entities,

\* Ambros. de Sacram. l. ii. c. 7.

† Tertul. ut sup. & Basil. de Sp. Sanct. c. xxvii.

‡ Hieron. contr. Lucifer, c. iv. & Lib. ii. in Ephes. iv.  
which

which is repugnant to reason : or, that we are commanded to derogate, in the most blasphemous manner, from the sole prerogative of the supreme Godhead, by giving his honor to others, which Religion forbids : or, which is free from all condemnation, that the three persons, who are supposed to convey to us, by this sacrament, a fœderal right to all the privileges and blessings of the Gospel-covenant, are equally objects of our prayers, equally able to answer our prayers, and therefore are equally divine.

And not only in the rite of baptism, but in many other parts of divine worship, the service of the church was purposely framed to preserve this doctrine pure and uncorrupted. *Origen* says, that “ the water in baptism was consecrated, by an invocation, of the divine Majesty of the adorable Trinity\* :” and *Cyril* says, the bread and wine in the Eucharist was, in like manner, consecrated by invocation of the adorable Trinity†. Agreeably to this, and to what had been, in a very early age, appointed by the Liturgy of the Church, and was still continued down to this time, we find, in the 12th chapter of the Constitutions, the prayer at the oblation concludes thus : “ To thee belongs all glory, and worship, and thanksgiving, and adoration, the Father, and the Son, and the Holy Ghost, now and for ever, throughout all ages,

\* *Origen*. tom. vi. in *Joan*. ap. *Basil*. de. *Sp. Sanct*. c. xxix.

† *Cyril*. *Catech*. *Myst*. i. n. 4.

world without end. Amen". In the next chapter the prayer after consecration ends in the same manner. In the 15th chapter the Bishop delivers a thanksgiving in the like words: and in other parts of this collection of rituals there are many such doxologies constantly used; all which are undeniable instances of the worship that was paid to the Son and the Holy Ghost, as well as to the Father.

These doxologies have been mentioned before, as indeed they might have been in every Century; but I have reserved the full investigation of them to this, both because it will best appear that they have been the constant language of the Church, and because the writers after, as well as before the Nicene Council, have borne testimony to the use of them in constant succession, from the beginning of christianity to that time. I shall therefore now endeavour to trace them from the first.

In order to this I shall go back to the usage of the Jewish church, from whence they were originally derived, and shew the authority which the christian church had for continuing them.

Isaiah is emphatically styled the Evangelical prophet, because he nearly approaches, in many of his revelations, to the spirit of the Gospel. Thus, among many others particularly descriptive of Christ's kingdom, which is his Church, in his vision of the *Schekinah*, he has represented the Seraphims



phims chanting to each other the glory of the Godhead, in the very same *trisagium* in which the Apostle has described them proclaiming the divine majesty in his vision of the heavenly choir.

“And one cried unto another, and said, Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord of Hosts.” Isai. vi. 3. Similar to which is the voice of the heavenly Host in the Apocalyptic prophecy, “And they rest not day and night, saying, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty, which was, and is, and is to come.” Rev. iv. 8. What important truths the Jewish church collected from this passage in Isaiah will appear from their *Talmud*, which is the best collection they have of the writings of the Jewish Doctors upon the Old Testament.

*Galatine* has produced two expositions of this Text, which are strictly applicable to our purpose\*: The one is taken from the illustrious *Rabbi Simeon*, who has left a remarkable comment upon it: *מדיש זה אב* that is, *Holy, this is the Father*: *מדיש זה בן*: that is, *Holy, this is the Son*: *מדיש זה רוח הקודש*: that is, *Holy, this is the Holy Spirit*:—The other is from a paraphrast of very considerable note for the purity of his style, and his many useful explanations of the prophetic language, *Jonathan*, the son of *Uzziel*, the chaldee paraphrast, who probably lived about the

\* Galat. de Arcan. Cath. Verit. l. ii. c. 1.

time of the first publication of the Gospel. He paraphrases upon the Text just in the words of the old Jewish language, the two languages being greatly alike, if not, as some learned men have imagined, originally the same. For thus his version supplies the whole sense, which was generally put upon the Prophets *מודיש אבא, Holy, Father: מוד כדא, Holy, Son: מוד רין מוד, Holy, Holy Ghost* \*.

St. John undoubtedly alludes to this *trifagium* of the Prophet in the doxology which the four beasts are represented, in his vision, to have sung continually before the throne of the Lord God Almighty, Rev. iv. 8, *Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty*, which was, and is, and is to come.—Wherein that they adore one God, and in that one God three Holies, is signified by the repetition, which both *Grotius* and *Erasmus* found to be threefold in most of the manuscripts; and an older Commentator than either of them understood to denote, as the Jews did before, a Trinity of persons in the Unity of essence, to be equally and jointly adored and worshipped, by the church on earth, and the choir in Heaven†.

Accordingly, the primitive church copied the hymn, which they called the *trifagion* from these

\* Vid. Hackspan. in loc. Maimon. More Nevoc. p. 1. c. 62: and Allix's Judg. ch. 11.

† Vid. Menoch, in loc. & Piscator, vid. etiam Athanas. Disp. contr. Ariam, p. 146.

two divine originals: for St. *Chrysostom* says expressly, that it was in the same words that the *Seraphim* sung in the prophecy of *Isaiah*. He mentions its being used in several parts of the service of the Church, and more especially at the Communion-table\*.—Among his works †, there is a homily of *Severianus*, Bishop of *Gabala*, which shews in what sense the Church in his time understood the triple repetition of the word *Holy*; for he explains the hymn, as it was customarily sung, just as the old Rabbies did the prophecy, “Holy is the Father: Holy is the Son: Holy is the Holy Ghost.”—St. *Jerom* too speaks of the cherubical hymn being sung in the church, at this time, as a public and religious confession of the adorable Trinity ‡.

*Athanasius*, in his dispute with the Arians, proves the Unity of the Father and the Son from the Apostle’s having joined them together in prayer (1 Thes. iii. 11.): *God himself and our father, and our Lord Jesus Christ direct our way unto you*. “No man,” he argues from hence, “could pray to receive any thing from the father and the angels, or from any other of the creatures; neither could any man say, God and the angels give

\* Chrysost. Hom. i. de verb. Isa. t. iii. p. 834. & Hom. vi. in Seraphim. p. 890.

† Tom. vi. Hom. 37.

‡ Hieron. de 42 Mansionibus in init.

me this\*.” But to what purpose would he have urged this argument, had not the church used the same invocation of Christ, together with the Father, in her prayers at this time? He would not have laid himself open, by the use of such reasoning, to be refuted by the practice of the Church, if that had been different from the Apostles. “But with respect to our worship,” says he in another place, “the Arians themselves must know, that we who worship the Lord in the flesh, do not worship a creature, but the creator clothed in a created body. Far be it from us to worship a creature; such a delusion suits only the Heathens or the Arians, but we worship the Lord of all creatures, the Word of God incarnate†.”—And again, at the conclusion of the same Epistle to *Philadelphus*, “the faith of the catholic church acknowledges the Word of God to be the creator and maker of all things; and we certainly know, that the word was in the beginning, and that the Word was with God, and that very Word we worship, which was made man for our salvation.

*Hilary* Bishop of *Poitiers*, who wrote twelve books upon the Trinity, sent a morning and an evening hymn, now prefixed to his works, in an Epistle to his daughter *Abra*‡, which is conceived in the form of a prayer to Christ, for preserva-

\* Athan. Orat. iv. contr. Arianos.

† Athan. Ep. ad Philadelphum Episc. V. I. p. 157, & 160.

‡ Hiller. Ep. ad Fib. Abram.



tion from the perils of the day and night; and concludes with the common glorification of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost.—“Glory to thee, O Lord—Glory to the only begotten—With the Spirit the Comforter, now, and throughout all ages.”—Can we suppose that *Hilary* would have misled his daughter, whose religious principles he had endeavoured with the utmost carefulness to settle, into the fatal errors of a false worship, if he had suspected in the least, that the worship of the Son, and the Holy Ghost, equally with the Father, had been inconsistent with the Scriptures, or repugnant to the practice of the Christian church?

Agreeably to this was the constant usage in the primitive church of the *Gloria Patri*, which makes a part of all the ancient Liturgies\*; and was intended from the very beginning of Christianity, as *Clemens Alexandrinus* has informed us†, to give *Glory to the only Father, with the Son, and the Holy Ghost*. And to shew how jealous they were of preserving this form of glorification to the three persons in the Godhead, without the least diminution of that divine honor which they thought due to each, we may observe, that when the Arians subtilly attempted to new-model it, that it might not clash with their own principles, which were in direct dissonance with the sense of the Church; so

\* See the Liturgies of Chrysostom and Basil.

† Clem. Alex. Pædagog. l. iii. c. 12.

far were they from admitting even the suspicious form, in which the others would have put it, *Glory be to the Father, by the Son, in the Holy Ghost*, that they not only rejected the alteration, as heretical, and sharply reproved them for such an innovation\*; but, to guard against any future attempt, they likewise enlarged the old form, and annexed it to their Liturgies, with “*Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, now and ever, world without end†.*”

*Theodoret* and *Sozomen*, the Ecclesiastical Historians, have both mentioned the difference that arose in the church of Antioch, about the year 349, occasioned by the alteration which was attempted to be made in this hymn by the Arians. In their choirs, while they praised God together, as the manner was, at the end of the Psalms, which they sung, it appeared what opinion every man held : forasmuch as they glorified, some the Father *and* the Son, *and* the Holy Ghost ; others the Father *by* the Son, *in* the Spirit : the one sort thereby declaring themselves to embrace the Son’s equality with the Father, as the Council of *Nice* had defined ; the other sort, against the Council of *Nice*, his inequality ‡.”

\* *Theodoret*, l. ii. c. 24.

† *Vid. Not. in Socrat.* l. i. c. 21 ; & *Athan. de Virgin.* p. 1051. In a very ancient form it runs, *Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, in the Unity of the Holy Ghost.*

‡ *Theod.* l. i. c. 24 ; & *Sozom.* l. iv. c. 19.

The doxology used in our Liturgy, Glory be to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Ghost, which is well calculated both against Arians and Socinians, *Basil* derives in its original, ἐκ τῆς τῶν Ἀποστόλων παραδόσεως, from the tradition of the Apostles themselves; and cites this doxology from *Clemens*, the scholar of the Apostles, and from *Dionysius* of *Alexandria*, who was living A. D. 200\*; whence it is evident, that it was used in every age.

In after ages, the Western Church, excepting the Roman, in a Council, held A. D. 529, at *Vaison* in *Gallia* †, that it might be made still stronger in favour of the orthodox tenets, added the next versicle, as it now stands in our Liturgy; *As it was in the beginning*, &c. declaring by this addition against the Arians, who maintained that there was a time before Christ had any beginning; and declaring too, that this was the primitive form, and the old established way of praising God.

Some have ascribed this latter clause to the Council of *Nice*; and others have alleged, that the Church received it by common consent, in conformity to the doctrine of that Council. There is no doubt, but it is very ancient; whether before that Council we cannot tell; but it might, for aught we know, be used from that time. If the Epistle to *Damasus*, under the name of *Jerom*, be

\* Basil de Sp. Sanct. c. xxvii. & xxix.

† Concil. Vafense, c. iij.

genuine, it is probably thus old; for there he advises *Damasus* to order, that in the Roman church, at the end of every psalm, there should be added, *Glory be to the Father, &c.* at full length\*.

This short hymn, as it is often called, was of universal use, and was the invariable form of giving praise to the Godhead, at the close of almost every office in the church. The Western Church, in the time of *Tertullian* †, repeated it at the end of every psalm, and the Eastern, at the end of the last psalm. Many of their prayers too were afterwards concluded with it, particularly the consecration prayer at the Eucharist; and it was the usual conclusion of their Sermons. For so *Basil* has testified in his vindication of his own usage of this form at the end of his sermons: against the charge of innovation for this, he replies, “that it had been constantly done throughout every age, by *Clemens Romanus*, *Irenæus*, *Origen*, *Chrysostom*, and others, both before and after *Arius*, whose sermons he had seen, and they always ended with a doxology to the Trinity‡”. Indeed, these were the very words with which their sermons were generally concluded: “That we may obtain eternal life through Jesus Christ, to whom, with the Father, and the Holy Ghost, be all glory and power, world without end;” as may be seen

\* Hieron. Ep. ad Damas. liii.

† V. Tertul. de Spectac. c. xxv.

‡ Basil de Spirit. Sanct. c. xxix.



in the Homilies of *Chrysostom*, *Basil*, *Austin*, and most others.

But the most justly celebrated, and most sublime hymn, that this or any other age could ever boast of, is what is commonly called *Te Deum*. The most general opinion has been, that it was composed by St. *Ambrose*, or by him and St. *Austin* jointly; though others have doubted whether either of them had any hand in it. It is certain, however, that *Ambrose* wrote several hymns for the use of the Church, and more particularly some against the Arians *to the glory of the Holy Trinity*. Of this he gives an account himself in his tract against *Auxentius* \*. “They allege”, says he, “that the people are deceived or misled by the poetry of my hymns; nor do I altogether deny this: for what can be more powerful than the confession of the Trinity, which is daily celebrated by the mouth of all the people? They all zealously strive to confess the faith: they all know how to celebrate the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost, in verse.” Well might the heretics say of him, as the Jews did of Christ, *Nay, but he deceiveth the people*: and upon much the same grounds.

St. *Austin* says, these hymns were sung, as the psalms were, in the alternate way, verse for verse, by the people†, in his time: and we are sure

\* Ambros. Orat. contr. Auxen. ad calcem, Ep. xxxii.

† Aug. Confess. l. ix. c. 7.

they were continued in use in the following ages, for the fourth Council of *Toledo*, Ann. 633, mentions them. St. *Ambrose* speaks likewise of the use of that ancient hymn the *Trisagium*, when the sacrifice was offered, the priest and the people saying, "Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Hosts, all the earth is full of thy glory \*." *Jerom* too in his time mentions the use of the *Trisagium*, or cherubical hymn, Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabbaoth, which they sung as a confession of the Holy Trinity, exactly in the words of the *Te Deum*.

I have mentioned all these circumstances to shew how probable it is, notwithstanding what has been said to the contrary, that St. *Ambrose* might be the author of this solemn hymn. It is directly levelled against the heresy of the Arians, as St. *Austin* affirms all his were. It is calculated by its composition to be sung in the Church, as his used to be; exactly, indeed, in his style and manner of writing in short sentences: from all which peculiar circumstances we may safely conclude, that it was the production of this century; and none so likely to be the author of it as St. *Ambrose*.

It begins with a solemn address of universal praise to God the Father, wherein all the inhabitants of heaven and earth are said to join, in

\* Ambros. de Spirit. Sanct.

the words more especially of the *Trisagium*, or cherubical hymn; and agreeably to the sense of this, the holy church, throughout all the Christian world, is represented, as acknowledging the infinite majesty of the Father; of the true and only Son; and of the Holy Ghost the Comforter.—After the mention of the whole Trinity by their several names, it directs our praises more particularly to Christ, the king of glory, as the everlasting Son of the Father; the Son incarnate of the Virgin; who debased himself, that he might exalt all believers in him; is now seated at the right hand of God in the glory of the Father, which he had before been a partaker of; and will one time come again in that same nature, which he had assumed for our sakes, to judge the quick and the dead. Thus divine in his nature, thus eminent in his mediatorial relation to us, the prayers of the congregation are immediately directed to this Redeemer of the world for help, that they may be qualified, by virtue of his redemption, to be numbered among the Saints in glory everlasting: and for this end they join in magnifying him day by day, and worshipping his name ever, world without end; that he would vouchsafe to keep them from sin, and have mercy upon them, because they had always trusted in him; and now pray, that they may not be confounded, by any failure of duty

on their part, or of the hopes of God's mercy through him.

Can it be conceived after this, or will any one have the effrontery to suggest, that no prayers were offered up to Jesus Christ by the Christian Church in this age? Can a more pious, more animated, or more noble instance of Christian devotion be devised for the use of any church in the world, than this; wherein Angels and the blessed Spirits are represented, as joining with us in the most solemn strains of adoration and praise to the ever-blessed Trinity?

But this century is so pregnant with proofs of the Church's invoking Christ, as God, upon the most solemn occasions, that I must add a few more: to mention all would be endless.—*Chrysostom* often refers to the prayer, as one of the public prayers of the church, which was purposely made for the sake of the *Energumens*, or persons who had been possessed by evil spirits, when they received the Bishop's benediction, and is personally addressed to Christ, in these words: "O thou only-begotten God, the Son of the great Father—whose truth endures for ever; whom infants praise, and sucklings bless, and angels celebrate and adore,—Rebuke the evil spirits, and deliver the works of thy hands from the vexation of the adverse spirit: for to thee belong glory, honor, and adoration, and by thee to thy Father, in the Holy Ghost, world without



without end. Amen\*.”—I have taken those parts of the prayer only, which evince the point in hand: the whole may be seen in the Constitutions, displaying throughout the power and majesty of God the Son.

If we examine the usage of particular churches during this century, or the devotions of private Christians, our inquiries will tend to establish still more fully the truth of the practice for which we contend.—In the beginning of the century a most bitter and rigorous persecution was set forth by *Dioclesian* against the Christians: they were tormented on all sides in the most inhuman and barbarous modes of punishment: their churches were ordered to be pulled down: an immense number of persons, without any distinction of rank or sex, many illustriously distinguished by their piety and learning, became victims of his cruel edicts, in a manner too shocking to relate, inasmuch that, as *Lactantius*, who was an eye witness of a great deal, says, “a hundred tongues and the longest voice would be insufficient to enumerate the multitude of martyrs in all parts, or recount the infinite variety of miseries and torments which they endured.”—But *Eusebius* has mentioned one instance, which it may well be thought could not have been exceeded for horror; which is,

\* Constit. l. viii. c. 6. & Chrysost. Hom. 18, in 2 Cor.

that

that a whole city of *Phrygia* being met together in their church, men, women, and children, magistrates and people (for the whole city was Christian), they were suddenly invested by their persecutors, and barbarously burnt all together in the church, as they were at their devotions, and *calling upon Christ the God over all* \*. I mention the story for the sake of this latter clause, to shew the customary form of this church, and the object of their divine worship. Indeed, *Eusebius* himself has made a general reflection upon it in another place †, That “the highest powers on earth confessed and adored Christ, as the true Son of the supreme God, as the true and very God.” And yet it is well known that *Eusebius* was by no means partial to that faith, which he acknowledges to be universally professed: therefore he cannot be accounted an unfair witness, on this side of the question.

The same Historian, giving an account of the passion of *Porphyrius*, a martyr of *Palestine*, says, when he was furrounded with the flames, for he was burnt alive, after having suffered more than can be described without horror, he called expressly upon Jesus, the Son of God, to be his helper. And no sooner had he uttered those words, than he gave up the ghost ‡.

\* Euseb. Eccles. Hist. l. viii. c. 11.

† Euseb. l. x. c. 4.

‡ Euseb. de Martyr. Palest. c. 11.

*Ambrose* likewise mentions the death of *Vitalis* the martyr, and that he offered up his last prayer in the same strain of piety, "O Lord, Jesus Christ, my Saviour and my God, command that my spirit may be received; for I desire to obtain the crown, which thy holy angel hath shewed me\*."—But we have met with so many instances of this kind, even from the days of *St. Stephen*, who set the example, to this time, that it is needless to name more. *Baronius* will furnish any one, who wishes to search further in the inquiry, with many to the purpose, ad. Ann. 303.

In this fourth century the most eminent authors wrote so many homilies and commentaries, some upon the whole, and others upon various parts of the Scripture, that it would be endless to produce all the illustrations and references to the separate texts, as I have done in the foregoing ages. Suffice it to say, that there is not a controversial passage, which is still urged either by the Arians or the Socinians, that was not produced by the orthodox of that time, as they were then called, in confutation of the tenets of the adverse party.

After such a *cloud of witnesses*, for four hundred years together, all tending to confirm the position I have undertaken to establish, it seems unnecessary to go further in the inquiry;

\* *Ambros. Exhort. ad Virgines. t. i. p. 105.*

especially,

especially, as it is meant only to confront the bold pretensions of the Unitarians and Socinians of the present time, who presume to derive their own principles from these first and purest ages of the Christian Church; whilst they would persuade their untaught followers, that the belief of Christ's divinity, and the practice of the Church, as far as it related to the worship of him were all along growing corruptions of the Christian faith.—I do not pretend to say, that there were no heretics in those days; but this we know from undoubted authority, that they were resolutely opposed, *even unto blood*, by the Catholic Church at large, as it was properly called: and whenever they were discovered, under their disguises, they were immediately excluded from the communion of the faithful. But the truly orthodox, who were styled such from their steadfast belief in Christ, and their constant worship of him, as God, suffered as many hardships from their adversaries of the Arian party, as they ever did, or well could, from their heathen persecutors. Still this is a proof beyond contradiction, that the body of Christians at large were of one mind in this respect, although a bold schismatic now and then arose with some novel opinion to disturb the peace of the church.

Such mischievous attempts, however, were productive of much good. They gave occasion to the framing of many creeds, which explain the doctrines



doctrines of the church more fully than they would otherwise have been explained: for these were considered as the canon or rule of faith, as they are sometimes termed, for the use of the several churches, who called themselves Christians: and the test too, for no age was ever without a Test, by which they examined the principles or qualifications of such as were to be admitted into the church, or rejected. For this purpose, every Bishop was authorised at the first, to form a creed for the use of his own church; and to express it in such terms as were best suited to meet with the heresies that were most prevalent at that time or place, and from which he apprehended the greatest danger of apostacy. Hence it is that we find so many different ways of expressing the same rule of faith, and the number of articles occasionally increased.

It is no improbable opinion of *Erasmus* and *Vossius*, two very able critics, that the most ancient creeds went no further, than the form of baptism, viz. to believe in the Father, Son, and Holy Ghost; but that the other articles were added at different times, as the heresies which sprung up in the church gave occasion\*.—It is certain they were designed for the instruction of catechumens before baptism: for unless they

\* Vid. *Erasm. ad Conf. Paris. tit. ii. & Voss. de Symbol. Diff. i. n. 38.*

would

would make this confession of their faith in the face of the church, after their conversion, their baptism was rejected, by the Council of *Artes*, and afterwards by that of *Nice*: such was the decree of the Council, "If they do not answer to this doctrine of the Trinity, let them not be baptized \*." We are told, that the baptism of the *Marcionites* was rejected by the Eastern Church, because they held heterodox notions concerning the Trinity.

Agreeably to this determination of the Catholic Church, it was, that *Athanasius*, in his writings looked upon all heretics of this kind as totally excluded from the saving benefits of the Christian faith: even because they were not in his time allowed so much as the name of Christians. Nor is he singular in this. *Lactantius* says, that the Arians are no Christians†: *Hilary* says the same‡: and accordingly, the Emperor *Constantine* therefore enacted a law to this purpose, that the Arians should not be called *Christians*, but *Porphyrrians*, as resembling that infamous blasphemer of Christ, whose work against the Christians, full of virulence, rather than of argument, was publicly burnt by his imperial edict||. *Theodosius* the

\* Vid. Cyprian. Ep. lxxiii. Tertul. de Baptism. c. vi. & Basil. Ep. Canon. xlvii.

† Lactant. Instit. l. iv. c. 3.

‡ Hil. ad Inst. l. i. p. 98.

|| Constant. Imp. Ep. ad Episc. ap. Socrat. l. i. c. 9.

younger, in after-times, made another law to the same purpose against *Nestorius* and his followers, that they should not abuse the name of Christian, but be called *Simonians*, after the name of the arch-heretic *Simon Magus*, because they corrupted the common faith, and denied the Lord, by whose name they were called\*." The doctrine then of the Trinity in Unity, and Unity in Trinity, which is the substance of the Athanasian creed, is the baptismal faith: and that certainly is necessary to salvation, if any faith be.

The damnatory clauses, as they are called, of the Athanasian creed have given more real, or pretended offence to the enemies of the catholic faith, than any other writing of antiquity; but if they would interpret them in the same spirit of moderation with which they were penned, perhaps the offence might be done away. The creed is to be considered, as no more than the catholic doctrine of the Trinity, guarded against the several heresies which it was calculated to oppose in its several parts. This doctrine, as it was taught by the church, was the chief term of church communion, as it had always been of admission into it. Now it was a common saying among the primitive writers of that age, *Extra Ecclesiam nulla salus*: There is no salvation out of the pale of the church: that is, unless they made a formal recantation of

\* Cod. Theod. l. xvi. tit. v. de Heretic. c. lxvi. & vid. Concil. Sardic. Ep. Synod. ap. Theod. l. ii. c. 8.

their heretical principles: from whence it followed in their ideas, that the fundamental doctrine of the Trinity, and the church, as well as religion of Christ, must stand or fall together: and therefore the belief of the catholic faith thus understood was adjudged as necessary to salvation, as it was to be a Christian. This is exactly what the Scripture has told us from the mouth of Christ himself: *He that believeth and is baptized, in my name, shall be saved: but he that believeth not, shall be damned.* And it is no more, with all its seeming severity, than what John the Baptist had before delivered to his disciples, *He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life, or has a sure title to it; and he that believeth not the Son, shall not see light, but the wrath of God abideth on him,* and will bring him to final condemnation: or, as both our Saviour and the Baptist mean, he shall be condemned, as an Apostate, by God's righteous judgment, to everlasting punishment.

Upon this ground it is, that in every ancient creed, transmitted down to us, of which there are many upon record, we find an anathema constantly denounced against those who dissented from the principal articles of it, because they were the essential articles of Christianity itself. But this anathema, which sounds so harsh to us, at this distance, is explained by the canon of the Council of *Gangra*, a city in *Asia Minor*, which



which was held, most probably, so early as A. D. 324, or at the latest date, in A. D. 340, to mean no more than an excommunication from the society of the catholic church : for so says the canon xix. " Let him be anathema, that is, declared excommunicate, or cut off from the church." It must be allowed, however, that this was supposed to imply, that as they denied the covenant of grace, by denying its author, they would be shut out from the benefits of the covenant, and therefore had nothing to trust to, for their future security, but uncovenanted mercy.

Baptism is the appointed rite, by which admission is gained into that covenant ; but *that* baptism was reckoned unavailable, which was not administered according to the prescribed form, and with the requisite confession of the true faith, which that form declared : and therefore if this faith was necessary to baptism, which alone puts us into a state of salvation, then may it well be said to be likewise necessary to be believed for salvation. For in saying, as *Cyprian* does, " that He cannot be made the Temple of God (as we all are by baptism) who denies Christ to be God," he says, in effect, that such an one cannot be saved. And indeed *Irenæus*, before him, excluded all who denied Christ's divinity, from church communion, and from a state of grace and salvation upon that score. " For," says he, " how  
I can

can they be saved, unless it was God who wrought their salvation upon earth? The spiritual man therefore will pass judgment upon the Ebionites, whose fundamental error was this\*." *Cyprian* has further said, "that salvation depended upon this article of the Christian faith." From all which we cannot but conclude, that this ancient creed spoke no other language than that of the former times; and when understood according to the received sense of that language, it conveys nothing but what every Christian, without the hazard of forfeiting his charity, may repeat.

I do not mean to enter into the controversy about the author or age of this primitive creed: whether it was *Athanasius* himself, as our excellent *Hooker* supposes, or *Vigilius Tapsensis*, as *Dr. Waterland* imagines: but it appears to me that the dispute might easily have been settled, and the point determined at once, if they would but have relied upon the authority of *Gregory Nazianzen*, a Bishop of high repute in this very century, and therefore most likely to know; who mentions it, "as a royal gift," and expressly tells us, "that *Athanasius* presented it to the Emperor *Jovinian*; and that it was received in his time, both by the Eastern and Western churches, as a treasure of inestimable price†." It must be confessed, however,

\* *Iren.* l. iv. c. 33. al. 53.

† *Greg. Nazian.* in laud. *Athan.* Orat. xxi.

that

that it is not to be found intire in his writings, exactly in so many words : but in substance it is, in many parts.

If we are inclined to trace the history of creeds up to their origin, we must go back to the time of the Apostles themselves. For when they separated from each other at Jerusalem, upon their respective missions, it is most probable that they settled some *rule of faith* for their future preaching, as a common standard ; lest they should be suspected of expounding different doctrines to their Christian converts in different places : for *Philip's* conversation with the eunuch, in the Acts of the Apostles, implies thus much ; and the practice of the church, in the succeeding ages, in not admitting any to baptism who would not answer to some previous interrogatories, shews it to be derived from the practice of the Apostles. In this sense the creed, which goes under their name, may properly enough be called apostolical ; forasmuch as it is perfectly consonant to their doctrine, and fully contained the substance of it.

For whether we believe that the Apostle's creed was composed by them, or not, yet it is certain that they had a summary, or rule of faith, drawn up for their use, which was committed to such persons as were appointed to the sacred offices of the Church, and was to be delivered by them in charge, as a holy *depositum*, to their successors in

the ministry; that there might be an uniformity preserved in what they taught, and that none of the fundamental articles of the Christian faith might be disguised or perverted by its own professors. This was that *form of sound words*, which St. Paul commanded Timothy *to commit to faithful men*, who might be instructed by such a formulary to teach others also, 2 Tim. ch. ii. v. 2. This he elsewhere calls *the form of doctrine that was delivered*, Rom. vi. 17. and St. Jude, that deposit of faith, *which was once delivered to the saints*, Jud. iii.; understanding by the word *once*, as many commentators have, that standard of faith, by which they had uniformly conducted their preaching from the very first, and which they commanded to be kept so entire and uncorrupt, that nothing essential might be added to it, or taken from it.

That this practice of the Apostles continued in use among their immediate successors, there is no doubt; for in *Ignatius's* Epistle to the *Magnesians*, if that part of it be his (Bp. Pearson and Cotelierius indeed thought it to be interpolated, others not), the substance of the Christian faith is well collected together, as it were into a system, which might be called his creed. After mentioning the ministry of Jesus Christ, he adds, "who was begotten of the Father before all ages, God the Word, the only begotten Son, and  
remains



remains the same to the end of all ages. For of his kingdom there shall be no end, says the prophet Daniel\* :” and again, “who was begotten of the Father before all ages, and afterwards born of the Virgin Mary, without the converse of men; who suffered and bore the cross under Pontius Pilate, and king Herod; was dead and rose again; ascended into the heavens to him by whom he was sent, and sitteth at his right hand; and shall come again at the end of the world with his Father’s glory, to judge the quick and the dead, and to render to every one according to his works. He who shall fully know and believe these things is happy †:” implying the reverse if he believe them not.

But if this Epistle must be looked upon as spurious, which is far from being certain, we may consult that to the Ephesians, published by *Isaac Vossius* himself, and acknowledged by all to be genuine. In this too he delivers the same apostolical faith, as if it were his creed: “for our Lord Jesus Christ was conceived of Mary, according to the dispensation of God, of the seed of David indeed, but by the Holy Ghost:” and to shew that he meant this, as the *form of sound doctrine*, he adds an anathema against the cor-

\* Ignat. Ep. ad Magnes. Ed. Cotel. c. vi.

† Id. c. xi.

rupters of this faith, no less severe than what every subsequent creed of the church has denounced against the heretical opponents: "Whoever shall corrupt this doctrine, shall be cast into the fire that never shall be quenched\*." But he had cautioned them against the wiles of such dangerous seducers a little before, by a declaration of the same kind of doctrine, which is likewise the summary of his faith: "There is one physician, carnal and spiritual, begotten and unbegotten; or, made and not made; God subsisting in man; the true life in death; both of Mary and of God; passible and impassible; Jesus Christ our Lord†."—What could better express his divine and human nature? Perfect God, and perfect man.

It is true, that these are not perfect formularies of the Christian faith; but they evidently appear to be fragments of it, so expressed, as if they referred to some more complete forms, which might be well known and received among them, though they are lost to us.—In the Epistle, however, to the *Philadelphians* (though *Cotelerius* would fain account this to be interpolated too), there is a more explicit form, in which they are exhorted to persevere in the unity of the

\* Ignat Ep. ad Ephes. c. xviii.

† Id. ad Ephes. c. vii.

faith,

faith, by this argument: "because there is one unbegotten, God the Father, and one only begotten son, God the Word, and Man; and one Comforter, the Spirit of Truth: there is also one faith, and one baptism, and one church, which the holy Apostles founded by their pains and labors in the blood of Christ, from one end of the earth to the other \*."

Some have thought that they have discovered a creed in *Polycarp*, and others in *Justin Martyr*: but as this does not sufficiently appear, I shall pass on to *Polycarp's* disciple *Ireneus*, who has undoubtedly left us a rule of faith, or, as he calls it himself, an *unalterable canon*, which every man received at his baptism, and which was then preached and taught throughout all the churches†. *Tertullian* likewise, towards the end of the same Century, refers us in one place to a *Symbol*, which was used in his time by the African church ‡; and in another place he has preserved the fragments of a creed, in another form, but not unlike what he had recited before ||.

When *Origen* collects the Christian doctrine into one form, he says of this rule of faith, that

\* Ignat. Ep. ad Philadelph. c. iv.

† Iren. l. i. c. 1. c. 19. & lib. iii. c. 4.

‡ Tertul. lib. de velandis Virg. ad init.

|| Id. de Præscript. Hæret. c. xiii.

it was manifestly handed down to that time by the apostolical preaching\*.—The very ancient author of the Apostolical Constitutions, whoever he was, prescribes a form to be recited by every person who was to be baptized, which agrees in almost every article with the creeds of the Eastern and Western churches; and enjoins it as an indispensable qualification for the anointing with oil, which was one ceremony of admission into the primitive church†.—*Gregory Nyssen*, in his life of *Gregory Bishop of Neocæsarea*, surnamed *Thaumaturgus*, has recorded a creed, which he is there said to have received at his entrance on his ministry‡: or, as others imagine, which he composed for the use of his own church||; and was accordingly preserved in that church at the time when *Gregory Nyssen* wrote his life: adding this circumstance, in order to heighten its authority, that “it was revealed to him from Heaven.”

But besides these, and many other creeds, or scattered remains of them, to be met with in the primitive writers of the church, there are still more perfect forms, to be found in the records of

\* Origen. *περὶ ἀρχῶν*. Præf.

† Const. Apost. l. vii. c. 41.

‡ Greg. Nyss. in vit. Greg. t. ii. p. 978.

|| Greg. Neve. Op. published by Vossius of Tongra, p. i.

those



those ages, which were looked upon as public creeds, and accordingly bore the names of the churches which used them, as derived in substance, though not in expression (for there was a diversity in this, though the faith was exactly the same), from apostolical authority. Such were the creeds of the church of *Jerusalem*, of *Alexandria*, *Antioch*, and *Rome*, till we come to those which were established by general Councils, as the *Nicene*, and the *Constantinopolitan*, which was indeed the *Nicene*, enlarged with the addition of such articles as were always used by the church, in the interrogatories which were put to the Catechumens before baptism, or before they were initiated into the Christian mysteries: in all which, as Dr. *Clarke* himself confesses, "there appears an uniformity in all the Christian churches, Greek and Latin, for the first three Centuries\*."

We may conclude then, upon recapitulating the whole, that the *Apostles Creed*, as it is called, was of great antiquity, if not derived, for the most part, from the days of the Apostles themselves: for most of its articles are rehearsed in the Epistles of *Ignatius*, who lived with several of them; and the whole form, as it now stands in our Liturgy, is to be found in the works of St. *Ambrose*, and *Ruffinus*, who both flourished in the fourth Century.

The

\* Script. Doctr.

The *Nicene Creed* is so called, because it is a paraphrase of that creed, which the Fathers, assembled at the first General Council of *Nice*, A. D. 325, drew up for the use of the catholic church, containing the primary articles of Christian belief: but it was put into the present form by the second General Council, held at *Constantinople*, A. D. 381. It more largely condemns all heresies, at that time sprung up in the church, than the Apostles creed: and more particularly establishes that fundamental doctrine of the *Homousion*, or co-essentiality of God the Father, and God the Son.

The *Athanasian Creed* contains the sum and substance of all orthodox divinity, the doctrines of the Trinity, and incarnation of Jesus Christ guarded against the innovation of schismatics and heretics; together with the mysterious union of Godhead and Manhood, illustrated by the no less mysterious union of the soul and body, which none but the materialist can deny: all the rest is only an occasional enlargement of these fundamental articles; and therefore he who believes these, virtually believes every other sentence of this creed, which was added only to illustrate and secure the truth of these main points. These are the articles, which are declared to be necessary to salvation; and the Scripture has declared the same; for the whole fabric of Christianity rests upon

upon them: but it does not follow from hence, that the belief of every tittle in the creed, however true, and received by ourselves as such, is therefore the necessary condition of the salvation of others. Surely then none need be offended at the public repetition of it in our churches; for it condemns none but those who will not believe and be saved.

The great reformer *Luther* has expressed his opinion of this creed in strong terms: "It is, he says, a firm bulwark to the creed of the Apostles, and an excellent preservative against those bold and impious wretches, who are not ashamed to make a jest of a Trinity in Unity, and to ridicule the incarnation of the only Son of God, two great and fundamental points, which this most holy and accurate system in some measure endeavours to illustrate, and with great solidity maintains\*."

At the same time let it be remembered, as a later eminent divine of our own church observes, that "it does not pretend to explain *how* there are three persons, each of which is God, and yet but one God; but only asserts the thing, that thus it is, and thus it must be, if we believe a Trinity in Unity; for the Athanasian creed, as

\* *Luther. de Tribus Symbolis.*

far as it relates to this matter, is only a more particular explication of the *Homoousion*, adopted by the Nicene fathers ; or in what sense the Son is of the same nature with the Father, and one God with him †."

\* Sherlock's Vindication, p. 14.





A N  
I N D E X  
O F T H E  
A U T H O R S Q U O T E D.

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ACTA Mart. Polycarp

— Ignatius

Allix

Apostol. Constit.

Ambrose

Arnobius

Athenagoras

Ashton

Augustin

Baronius

Barnabas

Basil

Bellarmino

Beveridge

Bull

Burnet

Caius Presbyter

Cave

Canon Apostol.

Clarke

Clemens Alexandrinus

Clemens Romanus

Chrysostom

Constantine Edict.

Cotelerius

Cyprian

Cyril

Didymus

Dionysius the Great

Dionysius Romanus

Doddridge

# I N D E X.

Doddridge	Mede
Epiphanius	Melito
Eraſmus	Novatian
Euſebius	Origen
Galatine	Paſoriſ Lex.
Gregory Nazianzen	Pliny
Gregory Nyſſen.	Polycarp
Gregory Thaumaturgus	Recognitions
Hackſpan	Sherlock (Dean)
Hammond	Socrates
Hilary	Sozomen
Jerom	Syriac. Verſ.
Ignatius	Taylor. Concord.
Irenæus	Tertullian
Junius	Testaments of Twelve Pa-
Juſtin Martyr	triarchs
Lactantius	Theodoret
Lardner	Theodoſius Cod.
Luther	Theophilus
Lucian the Philoſopher	Theophylaſt
Lucian the Martyr	Tremellius
Maimonides	Valeſii Not. in Euſeb.
Mill	Voffius
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